

HEROES IN RHYME

AND OTHER RANDOM VERSES



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HEROES IN RHYME

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AND OTHER RANDOM VERSES

BY

MAJOR-GENERAL OSBORN WILKINSON, C.B.

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PREFACE

IN submitting this work for the indulgent consideration of his friends, the writer would wish to say a few words explanatory of the order in which he has arranged his varied subjects, and of the circumstances under which he embarked in this venture.

He has divided his book into three parts:—In the first division, which is headed “Heroes,” he has attempted to record his admiration of some distinguished officers (most of them personal friends) who have rendered invaluable services to their country, and with their gallant deeds he has coupled the splendid prowess of an Indian chaplain, the Rev. J. W. Adams, who won the Cross in the Afghan War of 1878-9. Then there follows the historical record of three Classic Warriors, and some reflections on the Victoria Cross. The last chapter of this division concludes with a prophetic description of Kruger’s career, passing through three phases of the present war.

The second division, headed “Miscellaneous,” opens with an incident connected with the Indian Mutiny, when during a fight the writer’s life was saved by the present Colonel Evans, then a lieutenant in the 9th Lancers—who was called by his comrades Bashi Bazouk. The writer met his preserver accidentally in the Public Gardens at Buxton in 1898 after over forty years’ separation. This story is followed by other incidents, scenes, addresses, and Penny Readings, written and recited by the author for the amusement of British soldiers.

The third part, headed "Odds and Ends," contains selections from an accumulation of rhymes on various subjects, which the writer certainly never dreamt would ever appear in print, and even now he would hesitate to utilize them, were it not that his book is intended only for private circulation, and the writer ventures to think his readers, chiefly old friends, will pardon their reproduction on this occasion. The verses really claim no poetic merit—but as the last effort of a very old soldier, the survivor of the Gemini Generals, they may serve, not only to amuse relations and friends, but enable the writer, by the sale of his book, to add a pebble to the erection of a new Mission House which is much needed in the parish in which he is spending the remainder of his days.

In conclusion, the writer begs to offer his grateful thanks, to each and all of those kind friends, who have so generously helped him to defray the expenses incurred in printing this work.

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HEROES

THE V.C. AND OTHER BRITISH AND CLASSIC
HEROES, REFLECTIONS ON V.C., AND
CAREER OF KRUGER

LORD WOLSELEY

CRIMEAN comrades often tell
(Those soldiers knew Lord Wolseley well),
When in those deadly trenches pent,
His bearing was magnificent.
He then was acting Engineer,
Reckless of life, devoid of fear ;
To all his friends 'twas amply clear,
That "Garnet" was the coming man ;
Deny that fact no mortal can !
Has he not nobly justified,
Has he by word or deed belied,
The expectations prophesied,
Of him, whose uniform success
(Phenomenal, I must confess)
Would almost tax our heart's belief,
If told of any other Chief?
He, tried by every sort of test,
Has not been beaten by the best !
His Lordship never once has failed,
Though odds tenfold our troops assailed ;

His country has been prompt to ask,
For him in any ticklish task.
With each campaign he has returned,
With honours—more—and more confirmed.
Good fortune seems his steadfast friend,
To him a kindly hand to lend ;
With smiles irradiates his dreams,
And leads him on to glorious schemes !
Two rival Generals have appeared,¹
To whom old friends have rather feared,
Lord Wolseley would perhaps succumb,
And be shut up, from henceforth dumb !
With deference I would humbly say
These are *three* Generals of the day ;
Their deeds by all are undenied,
And I would place them side by side ;
Not one can we afford to lose,
With equal claims 'tis hard to choose,
As Wolseley boasts Tel-el-Kebēēr,
No rival need his Lordship fear !
That record of the Russian strife,
That epoch in Lord Wolseley's life,
That grand Crimean episode,
At once conspicuously showed,
The stuff of which our Chief was made,
The rock on which his fame was staid !
Sir Evelyn Wood with graphic pen,
Describes the scene when Wolseley's men,
At first, confused and scared, fell back,
Before the Russians' bold attack.
The example then by Wolseley set,
Not one who saw it can forget :
His valour on that great occasion,
Evoked the soldiers' admiration ;

¹ Kitchener and Roberts.

And oft again when others quailed,
He never for an instant failed.
Almost alone he stood his ground,
When scarce a comrade could be found,
To rally round him, as he tried,
Dauntless to stem the Russian tide;
The foeman bravely scored that day,
We talk but little of that fray,
Save "laud"—the "Lord," who was to be,
And is, the soul of gallantry!
E'en British soldiers sometimes fail,
And who am I that I should rail?
Our duty is to cast a veil,
O'er incidents that wound our pride,
And tend to nothing else beside!
The Russian onset cost us dear;
Before retiring to the rear,
Full fifty yards they made a gap,
In our advanced, extended sap,
Exposing men to ceaseless storm,
Of shot and shell, and every form,
Of fire, within a musket reach,
Of outworks, with that gaping breach!
To mend that gap was deadly work,
But one no Wolseley-born would shirk!
A "hope forlorn" it seemed to be,
With death almost a certainty!
But Wolseleys, few and far between,
Are just the boys for such a scene!
And he, without a moment's pause,
Plunged into death's devouring jaws.
With him alone, to fill the gap,
A Sapper stood, a fine young chap;
No heroes showed a braver front,
Or bore more gallantly the brunt.

Of perils—which howe'er appalling,
Must needs be faced—the soldier's calling!
As nobly by the sap they knelt,
Their comrades surely must have felt,
That every instant was their last;
For shot and shell were pouring fast,
From Russians, then distinctly seen,
Collected in a deep ravine,
With scarce two hundred yards apart,
A sight to daunt the stoutest heart!
In front of all on bended knee,
The Captain stood unflinchingly,
With gabion ready to be filled,
Unless he happened to be killed!
And close behind, that Sapper true,
Into the gabion earth he threw,
Over the Captain's shoulders broad,
Those destined for a noble Lord!
That gabion when half filled, was struck,
By round shot; but by rare good luck,
That shot our hero failed to slay,
Left him to fight another day.
Severely wounded, bruised, and crushed,
His voice seemed then for ever hushed!
No skill required his wounds to seek,
A stone had pierced right through his cheek,
And with no hindrance and no check,
Had found a lodgment in his neck.
Before 'twas spent, it bruised his jaw,
And left a most persistent raw.
His right shin bone was also slashed;
His wrist too, was severely smashed.
The Sapper thought his Captain dead,
And dragged the body from the head
Of that dread sap—with fond desire,

When he could leave his post of fire,
To lay it in some quiet spot,
Afar from bullet, shell, and shot.
But he, reserved for grander things,
For deeds with which the welkin rings,
Became that "Garnet" of renown,
The brightest gem in England's crown,
And now commands with flag unfurled
The finest Army in the world!

LORD ROBERTS

I SING of Bobs, our C.-in-C.,
Unrivalled seem his deeds to me;
By side of him, however tall,
Men be, they look uncommon small.
And by this token, I premise,
Some say, that writers rude, unwise,
Who call his Lordship—"Little Bobs"!
Must be allied with arrant snobs;
Retain your own opinions pray,
And that is all I have to say!
Long, long ere he became a Lord,
We were old friends: I can't afford
In my old age to "My Lord" *him*;
It sounds so formal, cold, and prim.
With Bob-like name he won his fame,
Is "Bobs" to me, always the same!
My wife, for instance, comes out strong
(Squabbling with me, she's ever wrong);
She firmly deprecates allusions,
To what she calls my vain delusions,
And thinks me most impertinent,
Whatever be my true intent,
To speak of "Little Bobs"—a style
Which might my Hero tend to rile!
Being herself a trifle wee,
Her own perfections she don't see.

And quite forgets that "Little and good"
Has been for ages understood ;
What finer, nobler illustration,
Than "Bobs"—old England's admiration !
A proper sense of due proportion,
Is prone I think to some distortion,
When ladies, puffed with vanity,
Judge subjects of humanity !
Subjects in which men must prevail,
When arguing with the wee female !
If Bobs a moment will reflect,
How could I harbour disrespect,
Towards my friend, as true as steel,
As man of war my beau ideal !
His Pandy tales our feelings harrow,
And some again "freeze up our marrow,"
And cause "our knotted locks to part,
And stand on end with sudden start,
Like quills on fretful porcupines,"
When tortured by my doggrel lines !
'Tis Shakespeare that I paraphrase,
He helps me "Little Bobs" to praise !
I now recall his telling me
He soon would be a proud V.C. ;
It was a secret most profound,
Of which I was to breathe no sound !
How far I kept this bounden pledge,
I could not now with truth allege !
But if I did the fact reveal,
I warned each friend he must conceal,
The secret which I'm sure was told,
To only those as true as gold !
Bobs may, perchance, this fact forget,
In my own heart 'tis firmly set !
The danger, worth, and cost combined,

Would all have flashed across my mind
Had I gone in for that V.C.
Which Bobs then gained so valiantly.
This one thing I should not have done,
Should not have chosen *two to one* !
'Tis fair to me, I should point out,
Though not a giant, nor a lout,
'Twas likely from my size and shape,
Though I got hit, Bobs might escape ;
In this, I hope, there's no offence
In dwelling on our difference.
A bigger man, I merely meant,
A bigger target would present !
And therefore I, a prudent man,
Might have declined the risks he ran !
Comparisons I would not crave,
Between our heroes all so brave ;
'Twould be a most invidious task,
And one for which I would not ask ;
'Tis clear, however, as the sun
That Bobs is second not to one !
How very poor the world had been,
Had "Khodagunge" then closed the scene,
On that great warrior's path to glory,
And his unrivalled thrilling story !
How often war the noblest robs,
Thank Heaven it spared our little Bobs !
That exploit in his V.C. tale,
For me has charms that never fail !
More ardently my bosom burns,
As each admiring thought returns,
To little Bobs, his daring deeds,
A feast on which the soldier feeds !
I often picture to my mind,
Our Hero casting to the wind,

All sense of risk, of doubt or fear,
And spurring for a village near,
For which two Sepoys tried to make,
Ere he their flight could overtake ;
But he was far too sharp for them,
And their retreat did quickly stem.
The standard-bearer stayed his pace,
And aimed at Bobs full in the face.
Haply the cap did not explode :
This providential episode,
Our Hero's precious life preserved,
Who never from his purpose swerved,
But cut the standard-bearer down :
And as a test of his renown,
The Pandy's banner he annexed !
A theft which none but Sepoys vexed !
A Pandy and Sowar that day,
Were struggling in a mortal fray ;
And while for life or death engaged,
And while the combat fiercely raged,
Bobs, hastening bravely to the aid,
Short work of that rash Pandy made ;
He slashed him straight across the face !
Disfigured thus, and in disgrace,
Despoiled of beauty and of life,
A victim to rebellious strife,
Showing the traitor's just reward,
Who came in reach of Bobs' sharp sword,
And there he lay—and let him lie,
Not fit to live, nor fit to die,
Denounced to all eternity !
With bayonet and musket armed,
Except to Bobs, whose life seemed charmed,
A Sepoy was in truth a caution,
To whom I should myself apportion

The best of it, if hand to hand,
In conflict, Horse and Foot should stand ;
If Horseman's weapon be a lance,
Perhaps he has a better chance ;
But Lancers fall and bite the dust
Before they can make good their thrust :
But muskets do, sometimes, miss fire,
Pistols the same defects acquire !
My friends, this happened twice to me,
I might have been in jeopardy,
For once, by Jove ! I lost my sword,
With safety this did not accord !
Just then the Pandies in retreat,
Thought it perhaps the more discreet
To let me pass, altho' unarmed,
I, thus, that day emerged unharmed !
The first time that my pistol failed,
My sword proved short when thus assailed,
The "Bashi" to my rescue came,
And spoilt with spear the Pandy's aim ;
My brains by Bashi's timely means
Were not all blown to smithereens !
Elsewhere this scene I have detailed,
When I was done for had he failed.
Before these verses I conclude,
To Bobs' own Book I must allude ;
'Tis known to all, his graphic pen,
Enchains the ablest, best of men ;
I, a veteran old and hoary,
Have revelled in his thrilling story,
'Twill add I think still further claim,
To his imperishable fame !
Biography like that will last,
As long as this old world stands fast ;
Nor fade in sunshine, nor in gloom,

Until the final crack of doom !
With such a wealth of brilliant matter,
I could not well our Hero flatter,
Beyond the measure of his worth,
The fame of which now spans the earth !
The praise to him which all accord,
Confirms his well-deserved reward.
No word of mine of use can be,
It can't hurt him, and pleases me ;
My sands, dear Bobs, are ebbing fast,
My future I dare not forecast,
Howe'er unworthy I may be
For space in your kind memory,
Your ripened greatness will descend
To find a corner for a friend,
An old, old comrade—"gone before,"
A pal of forty years and more.
This tale, a tribute poor, I tell ;
Accept it—little Bobs—farewell !

REV. J. W. ADAMS, V.C.

SINCE Adam's time (tho' long ago,
Of him most Christians something know)
No end of Adamses have sprung,
Of British and the Yankee tongue ;
With care, I've traced their pedigree,
Of Parsons only one V.C.
I find upon the roll of fame,
And Adams is his honoured name.
The "Cross" another "Adams" won,
But by a soldier *that* was done ;
'Twas Colonel Adams, then a "Guide,"
Whose valour with our Parson vied ;
I knew his Reverence very well,
And on his deeds I love to dwell ;
A man of peace, and man of war,
He was a hero to the core !
Three brilliant Adams' stars, we hear,
Illumined once the Yankee sphere.
If history I read aright,
"Sam" and "John" began the fight—
At least they joined the patriot band,
Which first upheld their native land ;
And first the British Lion dared,
And "Independence" then declared !
Such men as "Quincy," "Sam," and "John"
One does not often look upon :

And two, I think, were Presidents,
After those humbling, dark events,
When British pride received a fall,
Which must e'en now a blush recall !
'Tis known across Atlantic's ocean,
And in old England, I've a notion,
That we so grossly did behave,
That nothing could our bacon save,
About "Stamp Acts," and *that* Bohea
Which Yankees chucked into the sea !
To lose our right to rule that shore,
Made proud old England rather sore ;
But though we were so soundly licked,
And on each tender spot were kicked,
As bred and born, one blood and race,
We thought it really no disgrace !
When Greek meets Greek, or Cousins meet,
I don't see much in our defeat !
Besides, I know they would have failed,
Had they alone our troops assailed :
For more than once in dire distress
To Frenchmen's aid they owed success !
'Twas Adams ("Sam")—notorious fact—
Who "stamped" right out that hated act ;
An act so stamped with execration,
And with a nation's detestation,
And with a universal curse,
If not with something even worse !
From one of these, his namesakes three,
Our Adams hailed, *it seems to me* ;
But this of course is pure conjecture,
So, critic, pray withhold your lecture ;
The mightiest in mind and form,
Are called to meet a coming storm !
Heroes arise by nature's laws,

To shield their country's righteous cause.
Whilst we on "Adams" can depend,
Nations had better not offend !
When V.C. Parsons take our side,
To all opposers woe betide !
Let foemen all this warning take,
Before a hostile step they make ;
The soldiers brave, with grateful voice,
In "Padre" Adams did rejoice ;
In peace or war, 'twas their delight,
To follow him, their favourite !
O'er men he held a moral sway,
"Adams" they felt they must obey ;
As he for them would gladly die,
So they for him would death defy !
His sweet and sympathetic power,
Was used to soothe the last sad hour,
Of warriors passing fast away,
Struck down on each recurring day !
All saw he practised what he preached,
All manly hearts that secret reached.
For soldiers though not seldom rude,
In judging men are wondrous shrewd.
Officers, good, and brave, and true,
They know as well as I or you ;
For all distinctions bishops wear,
I should not, if a parson, care ;
Compared with valour's glorious "Cross"
Cleric rewards would seem like dross !
A bishop—aproned—and with mitre,
Looks small beside a parson fighter ;
Of course a bishop *and* V.C.,
Than Adams e'en would greater be !
My Lord Archbishop, I conclude,
(By nature I am far from rude.)

To your Episcopalian face.
I therefore humbly tell your Grace,
I strongly feel 'tis rather hard,
That one whom soldiers all regard,
As having such undoubted claim,
To grace the shrine of cleric fame,
To honours of the highest class,
Should still remain, alas, alas,
An ill-requited village priest!
"Archdeacon" he should be at least,
Or "Canon" sound, or some great gun;
(Of course I don't indulge in fun
In matters grave and serious
To laymen so mysterious!)
A "Canon" armed, his aim would be,
Directed to Eternity!
So straight and steady he could not,
Ever discharge a wrongful shot;
A "Canon" has an iron will,
Or steel—his views would he instil,
On all—and if in act or deed,
Men follow his consistent lead,
And strive for good, with heart and soul,
They will not miss the promised goal!
Their patronage I would not wrench,
From any bishop on the Bench,
I wish to show your Grace and lords,
How *I* should give away rewards,
Were I a bishop—that is all!
And here a fact I now recall:
I speak with some authority,
For long it seemed my destiny,
To join as parson grave the Church,
I own I left it in the lurch:
I jibbed, in fact, just at the last,

With soldiers gay my lot I cast.
Two years at Cambridge I had spent,
And then no longer felt content !
On wall, I saw, in letters writ,
For parson *you* are quite unfit !
Divines decreed a full divorce,
And I then joined the Indian Horse.
Had I returned to my first love,
And given my heart to things above,
I might have fought for "Ebors" see
(He was a soldier just like me),
I might have been perhaps "His Grace,"
While he was waiting for my place !
When Adams at the trumpet call,
His pulpit left, grief fell on all,
His flock, with which he loved to pray,
In peace or war he showed the way !
One's life to offer for another,
Exceeds the love of any brother,
And this is what brave Adams did :
Dismounting from his horse, he bid,
A wounded lancer grasp his arm,
And bore him past the reach of harm.
By this kind act his horse he lost,
This might his precious life have cost ;
For Afghan's Horse and Foot just then
Were pressing hard our routed men.
On, on they came with frantic yell,
Cutting to pieces all who fell ;
Like avalanche they swept away
The worsted Britishers that day.
Had Adams but retained his steed,
He would have spurned all human need.
Who could have stopped him in that strife,
Had he been forced to ride for life ?

No Afghan lived, who in a chase
Could rival Adams' lightning pace.
A horseman, famous, grand, superb,
In peace his ardour none could curb.
The fence or rail was never made,
That ever had our Adams stayed ;
A Nimrod in the world of sport,
But Preacher of the God-like sort ;
A Hero in the battle-field,
His only thought the maimed to shield.
Parsons have often proved serene,
Their valour shown on many a scene,
When blood and carnage have prevailed,
And perils countless have assailed.
But when in panic, self-control
Is lost—then each bewildered soul
Appears to crane at Afghan knives,
Their only thought to save their lives !
Disastrous is this state of things,
Which panic in its terror brings !
But whilst our force was pell-mell flying,
Two soldiers then were helpless lying,
Half crushed in nullah ; like a rock
Our Hero faced the coming shock,
Refused to move towards the rear,
Though death at every step drew near.
But further on I will explain
How Adams met this fearful strain ;
He was, I said, just then on foot :
The foe, athirst for blood and loot,
Were swarming down upon their prey,
'Twas death a moment to delay.
Demoralised, no heart to fight,
All safety sought in head-long flight ;
It was a terror-stricken hour,

In which sometimes the bravest cower.
As well one might almost have tried,
To dim the sun, as stem that tide,
Of men affrighted, scared, subdued,
Each step by Afghan hordes pursued.
One lancer Adams having saved,
A second time the peril braved ;
He hastened back and soon was found,
Where danger did the most abound.
At bottom of a "nullah" deep,
Waist-high the water, banks both steep,
Beneath their steeds two lancers lay,
Their fates seemed sealed that fearful day ;
For if not crushed or drowned before,
Within a few brief minutes more
They must have been, poor fellows, slain,
Past further torments—mortal pain.
The Afghan shouts, as all averred,
Amidst the din were plainly heard.
At such a crisis Adams sprang,
Without a pause or passing pang,
Into that awful, living grave,
Those two poor buried men to save.
A splendid feat—and God be praised,
Those victims both by him were raised,
And rescued from their gaping tomb,
A ghastly death, their certain doom !
Sabred or drowned, with no help nigh,
These horsemen seemed condemned to die ;
Their chargers struggling to get free,
Increased the soldiers' agony.
When those two lancers reached the bank,
A Hero of the noblest rank,
Emerged—preserver of their lives !
Ye husbands, daughters, sons and wives,

Join heart with heart and hand with hand,
Proclaim this feat throughout the land.
In pulpit and in battle's roar,
Let Adams—man of peace and war—
Be honoured and for ever blest,
His name engraved on every breast,
His glorious deeds, the preacher's text,
Extolled in this world and the next.

LORD GOUGH, AND GENERALS SIR CHARLES AND HUGH GOUGH

WHILST praising Hugh and Charlie Gough,
At others one inclines to scoff,
Comrades are dwarfed, it seems to me,
Before these Heroes' gallantry!
There'd be a "hue" and Charlie cry,
If any should their deeds deny;
And those who know them well declare,
As soldiers they are Heroes rare;
Fit scions of that warrior grand,
The noblest, bravest of our land;
Lord Gough, that go-ahead old chief,
Who hardly ever came to grief!
A soldier of Hibernian type,
For deeds of valour ever ripe;
A leader whom we must admire,
And most beloved, when under fire.
Chillianwallah, Ferozeshur,
Are names that now to me occur,
Successful battles they were called,
But were, as triumphs, rather bald!
Each was I know a closish shave,
The day we just contrived to save!
Our lion-hearted warrior thought,
With bayonets, wars should all be fought;

Cold steel, my gallant boys, cold steel,
His motto, war-cry, and appeal!
Straight at the guns, my lads, he said;
He, dauntless leader, far ahead;
And down of course went half his men,
Never poor fellows to rise again!
Though foiled at first he seemed to fail,
At last he always did prevail.
Despite his one "too daring" fault,
To us this lesson he has taught,
That all who follow his career,
Shall not an earthly conflict fear;
All those who keep within his track,
Shall ne'er the soldier's guerdon lack!
Noble Lord Gough, the soul of honour,
The incarnation true of valour!
I well remember Charles and I,
With youth and spirits running high,
And pride—perhaps a little vain,
"We fought our battles o'er again."
After the "Meeangunge" affair,
When we had taken each our share,
How much of envy filled my heart,
When he revealed to me his part,
At "Meeangunge" and other fights,
I cannot say—but by his rights,
By all his gallant deeds I knew,
The cross of valour was his due,
And I rejoiced with all my heart to see
He won his well-deserved V.C.!
In Charlie's first exploit he slew,
Two men and saved his brother Hugh,
Who lay disabled on the ground,
With savage Pandies swarming round.
Poor Hugh seemed doomed, by all deserted,

When Charles that cruel fate averted,
He in the nick of time arrived,
And of their prey the brutes deprived ;
It was a most fraternal deed,
In this the brothers both agreed !
Whilst charging with his gallant "Guides"
Charlie cut down two more besides ;
One, like a fiend—a trifle "tight"—
Fought for his life, as well he might,
For drugs with care and prudence drunk
Allay a tendency to funk !
In mortal combat Charles to meet,
One would require a "sipful" neat !
A rebel chief at "Shumshabad"
To slay our Charlie had a fad ;
But Charlie then was *so* ill-bred,
He ran the rebel through instead !
His sword, a legacy he left,
In Pandy's breast—and when bereft,
Of sword—two more Sowārs he shot
With his revolver on the spot !
But yet he was not satisfied,
Nor would his soul be gratified,
Till he had swept right clean away,
All those who crossed his path that day !
"Anson's" assailant he cut down,
And saved a hero of renown,
For "Anson" had the V.C. won,
Though now he was so nearly done !
Charles' worthy brother, brave Sir Hugh,
Has roll as brilliant, grand, and true,
They neck and neck have closely run,
The soldier's race, and honours won !
Their personal deeds are unsurpassed,
And long as time itself shall last !

A brilliant charge across a plain,
Just then a swamp from floods of rain,
His horsemen, Hugh, right nobly led;
Before that rush the rebels fled,
But not till they with sore dismay
Found "Kismet"¹ was no use that day;
They men could fight till all was blue,
But *Devils* 'twas a downright do!
They did their very best, but then
They, as I said, were only men!
Three Sepoys set at once on Hugh.
Were Pandies many, were they few,
Our Hero could himself defend,
On his sharp sword he could depend;
And these three chaps no doubt were sorry,
When they presumed our Hugh to worry!
His horse they slashed, and cut in two
His turban—more they wished to do,
And more no doubt they would have done
Had Hugh not scorned *their three to one*,
And proved a match for all the lot;
At least for them it seemed too hot,
For "right-about" they chose to face,
And left their guns in our embrace!
Next year, when serving at Lucknow,
Whene'er there chanced to be a row,
You might, I think, have dared to swear,
That Hugh would be most likely there;
He always longed to come to blows,
To charge their guns or sabre foes,
Or hand to hand was game to fight,
A single combat, his delight!
But he preferred (it suits my rhyme)
That they should come—*one at a time*!

¹ The Hindostani word for fate.

Combats like these are ticklish things,
Their prowess through the welkin rings!
But heroes rarely do escape,
Some ugly wound ; they give and take.
Whilst warring thus in deadly strife,
Each soldier knows he stakes his life ;
To live or die he leaves to fate,
To think of either is too late !
But as one dwells on Hugh's career,
His squeaks more wonderful appear !
Soldiers who dangers oft have dared,
Think it a marvel he was spared.
In charge, the latest one he made,
His life the forfeit nearly paid !
Two horses under him were killed,
A bullet through his leg was drilled,
A hole through helmet showed the light,
Through scabbard, too, in that one fight.
The brave old Lord could he awake,
His nephews to his heart would take ;
And proudly would defy all others,
To show him two more gallant brothers

GENERAL SIR JOHN WATSON,
K.C.B., V.C.

WHEN valour's visions pass us by,
Recalling deeds of chivalry,
What heart does not "within him burn"
When thoughts to themes heroic turn ;
And chiefly, if on deeds we dwell,
Performed by friends we know so well !
"Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself has said"
This is that Johnny Watson brave,
Who nobly India helped to save,
Then struggling in Rebellion's throes,
With all its dread, its awful woes !
Our Hero was a "Bombay Duck,"
Foresaw more scope for dash and pluck,
With Frontier Troops ; so in due course,
He joined that corps, the Punjab Horse,
Which has, throughout the world, 'tis known,
In endless fights its valour shown.
Amongst those dusky cavaliers,
Unrivalled Johnny still appears.
John Watson is a household name,
Received by all with one acclaim !
And how he did his honours gain,
I will endeavour to explain !

One day as dawn began to break,
Watson, as ever, wide awake,
Was watching for a lucky chance,
To wield again his sword or lance ;
For either weapon he could ply,
With skill, to make the keenest shy,
If they but knew the risks they dare,
Who fight with boys so young and fair !
While thus patrolling, John espied,
The rebels, who forthwith defied,
Our Hero ; down they came full tilt,
But ere a drop of blood was spilt,
The Russaldar—afar ahead,
Of his Sowars—for Johnny sped,
Who nothing loth, met him midway,
If needs be game to die that day !
On, on they dashed at charging pace,
And in a trice stood face to face.
For they had made an equal start,
And when within a yard apart,
The Russaldar designed a test,
He thought would pierce through Johnny's breast,
And make a great big gaping hole,
Fatal to body, and to soul !
The Russaldar had never heard,
Or if he had, deemed it absurd,
And so, I give my friends the tip,
There's many a slip 'tween cup and lip.
And many a pistol does misfire,
Against a man's express desire,
As I could vouch on two occasions
Unpleasant to my own sensations !
Well ! when within a yard apart,
The Russaldar at Johnny's heart,
His pistol then discharged point blank,

And Johnny had his stars to thank ;
The bullet must without a doubt
By some mistake have fallen out !
For John escaped without a scratch.
The Russaldar had met his match,
For when his pistol missed its aim,
To everlasting grief he came,
For Johnny ran him through and through !
At first he did not seem to rue,
His wound, which mortal must have been :
Unhorsed, he drew his tulwar keen,
And rushed at Watson with a will,
Resolved that Britisher to kill.
The Russaldar was joined just then
By half-a-dozen of his men,
Who hastened to their leader's aid ;
But he, the debt to valour paid,
To earth had fallen ; there he lay,
His life then ebbing fast away,
Urging his men with his last breath
T' avenge—avenge, their leader's death.
Incited thus, each sought to slay,
The slayer of their Chief that day !
The odds were fearful, six to one :
It seemed our Hero's race was run.
But he stood firm, receded not,
One step from that ensanguined spot.
With skill consummate he drove back,
In turn each foeman's fierce attack.
It was a marvellous defence,
'Gainst odds which I should call immense ;
Soldiers have oft their lives to stake,
Nor heed the risk they undertake.
No combat would our Hero shun ;
The greater risk, the greater fun !

But limit surely there must be,
To human acts of bravery !
Beyond that point, all soldiers know,
The deeds of valour cannot go ;
And John was nearly in that fix,
When he withstood those horsemen six ;
Exhausted soon he must have been,
Had not his men come on the scene.
He had outstripped them in the race,
And thus was left those odds to face ;
But now they to the rescue came,
And Johnny saved for future fame !
And soon they hacked and hewed their way,
To where our Hero stood at bay !
Within a few brief minutes more,
The Rebel Horse, at least a score,
Were trampled under foot or slain,
Not one of them would rise again !
The rest were put to utter rout,
And as a force were clean wiped out !
The triumph was unique, complete :
It was a grand, heroic feat !
When deeds of valour men recite,
They point with pride to that smart fight,
Its honour, glory, praise, and fame
Are all allied with Watson's name.
"A bleeding piece of earth" was John,
A bloody sight to look upon ;
For he, the victor of that strife,
Had only just escaped with life ;
Battered and marred from top to toe,
Not one sound limb could Johnny show.
Across his skull a tulwar slash,
Had left exposed an ugly gash ;
His sword-arm sliced was nearly lost

But that was not the only cost :
Severed his bridle-wrist had been,
Had not there chanced to intervene,
A gauntlet which throughout was mailed,
And thus the blow had partly failed.
But some Sowar with blade so true
Had cut the armour thro' and thro' !
A trifling wound the wrist sustained,
The limb itself intact remained !
That from some fire-arm he was spared,
A shot-hole in his coat declared.
A ball his body must have grazed,
But 'twas diverted—God be praised !
And from some blunted instrument,
Or from a bullet well-nigh spent,
He on his leg a blow received,
The bruise of which was long perceived !
That scar, which still I faintly trace,
Tells of a sword-cut on his face !
Such wounds on cheek, were sometimes squeaky,
But never made our Johnny cheeky.
I say that sabre-cuts are risky,
To reckless men, the young and frisky ;
John might have bled to death outright
With such a “ facer ” in that fight,
But he though bloody was so bonny,
Just like our bright and beardless Johnny !
Those who know our Hero well,
Would never think (the truth I tell)
Upon his ears the blast of war
Had fallen, nor the cannon's roar ;
In his most kind and open face,
Nothing ferocious could you trace ;
You could not well imagine him,
Then quite a lad, so lithe and slim,

“Disguising Nature” in a rage,
(Shakespeare I quote, the poet sage),
“Lending the eye” an aspect fierce,
Which would through any Pandý pierce ;
“Setting the teeth, with nostril wide,
Like tiger, when by man defied ;”
He most unlikely, I should state,
A savage beast to imitate !
Nor Johnny would you ever find,
Unless you happened to be blind,
“Capering in a lady’s chamber”
(Without a chaperon to protect her),
“To the lascivious pleasing of a lute,”
Such softness would not Johnny suit !
Effeminacy he despised,
But manliness he always prized.
“What—son” of mortal man,
And christened Johnny ever can,
Compare with him, my dear old friend,
In whom all martial instincts blend ?
I pity those who know him not,
Unfortunate I think their lot !
To know not Johnny, that alone
Would prove himself at once unknown.
A poorish creature, mark him well,
For him my “raptures shall not swell.”
Without a claim to minstrelsy,
He must a very duffer be,
An ignoramus of a kind,
The Poet had in his great mind,
When those ideas he did reveal,
From which I now so largely steal.
Not know our Johnny?—Well, I never !
I scarcely can conceive the feller !
Of course “he forfeits fair renown,

And doubly dying does go down,
T' the vile dust from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unpitied, and unsung."
My task is done—I quit my pen,
With feeling that amidst brave men,
He whose career I've tried to trace
Has nobly won the hero's place!
The Cross his valiant deeds attests,
And on no braver bosom rests,
Him "Johnny," comrades love to call,
The favourite, beloved of all.

GENERAL SIR SAM BROWNE,
G.C.B., V.C.

OUR Sam, the "Browne," was just like "White,"¹
For "White and Browne" with Black men fight
Like demons both (I know them well),
'Tis hot where now their foemen dwell!
Whoever dared to face our Sam,
In anger fierce, and man to man,
Was always done completely "brown,"
And bound to go for ever down!
Dear old Sir Sam was in his prime,
In that eventful stirring time,
A type of manliness and power,
A hero marked for that dark hour;
And him his comrades all adore,
As man of peace or man of war.
Unfeigned delight the soldiers showed,
Who saw the Cross on him bestowed;
They felt the honour, praised by all,
Could not on shoulders worthier fall.
It was a daring, desperate deed,
Men still recall his dashing lead;
The very slightest hesitation,
Must have involved annihilation!
Sir Sam commanded then a Force
Composed of natives, foot and horse:

¹ Sir George.

No British soldier had a share,
In that most perilous affair !
Sam knew and felt it was his mission,
To send those rascals to perdition !
He thought the foe in jungle thick,
Would firmly to their stronghold stick.
Convinced of their impervious site,
They bravely would resolve to fight,
Insuring "Sam" a glorious bag,
Of which he might for ever brag !
Awaiting, therefore, Sam's assault,
They quickly found themselves at fault ;
Regretting much their false persuasion,
That they could stem Sir Sam's invasion !
Drawn up in battle's stern array,
Sam's march began at break of day ;
By nature Sam was not designed,
For strategy of any kind ;
And tactics too, Sir Sam held cheap !
With lightning bound, and cat-like leap,
Bang into Pandy's line he crashed,
In Gough's own style, our Hero dashed !
I do not say he would despise,
The scientific dodges wise :
If fighting Germans staunch, astute,
Or Yankee cousins so acute !
No odds of Asiatics dread,
But at all cost, go straight ahead !
Let reckless dash, the only plan,
Inspire the true-born Englishman !
When close within the striking distance,
Sam saw the point of chief resistance ;
That they would bear the battle's brunt,
Who in the centre held the front ;
He saw a gun's projecting muzzle,

But how to reach it was a puzzle,
Before the gunner could apply,
His match. In twinkling of an eye,
Straight at that gun our Hero went,
To stay his, murderous intent !
With onset sudden and so fierce,
Sam was the first their lines to pierce.
Outstripping all, a death-like race,
He stood alone and face to face
With scores of Pandies round their gun,
Not less than twenty men to one !
To hew and hack him limb from limb,
Was then the fate designed for him !
His sword with might and main he plied,
Clearing great gaps on every side !
Man after man at once went down,
'Fore him, the leader, brave Sam Browne !
At last by numbers overborne,
Disabled by wounds he laughed to scorn,
Which, if companions had not staunch'd,
Sam in eternity had launched ;
A sabre-cut across the knee,
Was bad enough it seems to me ;
But slice right through the shoulder point,
Left all exposed the severed joint !
With arm suspended by a thread,
To death he must have quickly bled ;
But comrades to the rescue came,
And saved great Sam for further fame !
Enraged to see their leader fall,
With madding shout they one and all,
Like pack of bloodhounds in full cry,
With prey in view, and doomed to die !
Over the breach they wildly burst,
And quenched in blood the avenger's thirst ;

Helter-skelter the cravens ran,
Our Sepoys spared no mortal man.
Nay, more, I fear, with parting thrust
Smote those then writhing in the dust !
As at each step a Pandy fell,
Arose a loud triumphant yell !
At close of that ensanguined day,
There all in heaps the scoundrels lay ;
Derisive jeers at them were flung,
Wretches, unpitied and unsung !
No patriots of a righteous cause,
But rebels spurning nature's laws !
Gorged with the blood of innocent lives
Of maidens, children, helpless wives.
To slay such fiends, with crimes embrued,
Evoked our country's gratitude !
And as I linger on "Sam's" deeds,
On those for whom my heart still bleeds ;
Those victims of the Pandy days,
I feel that those avenging frays,
Were not applauded half enough,
Altho' they clearly showed the stuff,
Of which our Britishers were made !
Who would begrudge the homage paid,
To leaders of that gallant band,
Which made the first immortal stand
When called to meet the Mutiny
And win our greatest victory ?
I've now exhausted my last say,
Pray tell the Hero of my lay,
Altho' contented, as I am,
I'd much prefer to be a "Sam !"

SIR GEORGE WHITE, G.C.B., V.C.

BEFORE the Heroes' roll I close,
To noble deeds I would depose,
Performed by one, who was my friend,
To whom I now with reverence bend.
For he has shot ahead of me,
Far, far beyond equality!
Rejoiced to honour him, I am,
Just as I felt about "Sir Sam";¹
His type, his very counterpart,
Two heroes after my own heart!
In the early stage of Afghan War,
The great Sir George I often saw.
In past events a man is wise,
And boasts of his own prophecies.
To this old proverb I agree,
But how does it apply to me?
I watched the Hero, without doubt,
His comings in and goings out;
Foresaw almost at my first glance,
If kindly fate gave him a chance,
That he conspicuous in the van,
Would always be the foremost man.
So stout of heart and strong of limb,
That few could keep abreast of him;

¹ Sir Samuel Browne.

His spirit, zeal, impetuous go,
A leader born the way to show.
When I commanded at Kohāt,
The Ninety-second formed a part,
Of that important frontier post,
In that fine Corps I had a host ;
By George, I felt in George the "White"
I could not fail to be all right !
An embryo Hero at my side,
By instinct I on him relied,
And wished the Afghans all around,
Who, not yet cowed, defiant frowned,
Would come and try with us conclusions,
And vent on us their vain delusions.
The Afghan pale, would paler grow,
Confronted by a Highland Foe !
The Major was to them a sight,
To whom they'd show "the feather white" :
No higher rank had he attained,
And no distinctions had he gained ;
He longed for his baptismal fire,
Field service was his one desire ;
At least, 'tis my impression strong,
But when cock-sure I'm often wrong !
A burning love of his profession,
Suggested his assured possession,
Of every manly attribute,
Which we to Heroes do impute !
Yes, such was my Kohāt prediction,
Of Major White—and my conviction,
That he would reach the topmost tree,
Was not, I think, confined to me.
In Kurum's valley, later on,
I found him keen and bent upon
Getting his brave and "breechless" Corps

Nearer and nearer to the fore.
That was his aim, that was his goal,
That was the yearning of his soul.
Lord Roberts held a grand Durbar,
And princes flocked there from afar,
Many a chief of the Anak stamp,
Assembled in his Lordship's camp!
With deep respect for "Little Bobs,"
Stature attracts the Afghan Nobs;
They measure manliness by *size*,
That finds most favour in their eyes.
Surrounded by these stalwart men,
Of whom quite nine of every ten
Stood taller by a head than I,
(Six feet are mine, if heels be high ;)
I felt a pigmy by their side,
And me, I thought 'twould ill betide
To challenge them to show their might,
That would I leave to Major White!
Whilst thus discussing feats of strength,
Of thews and sinews breadth and length,
I thought with White, a fine athlete,
Not one huge Afghan could compete.
His strength might not have caught the eye,
Of any casual passer-by ;
We were about the self-same size,
But ah ! how little that implies :
To enter the pugilistic ring,
'Gainst White had been a dangerous thing !
Both blue and black had been my plight,
Had I but dared with him to fight !
I should have sprawled upon the ground,
The very first and only round !
Between us should a feud arise,
I always should apologise !

If he tied up a leg or arm,
I should, I own, have felt more calm.
A glimpse at White's compact physique
Might well have roused the Afghan's pique:
For in that neat and well-knit frame,
Such strength few other men could claim!
His biceps were, indeed, a caution,
'Twas herculean in proportion!
I knew that it astonished me,
When unprepared such limb to see!
Afghans were glad to be allied,
When George the White was on their side!
The gallant kilted Highland Corps
The Afghans had not seen before,
(I speak of course the "naked" truth)
There was on cheek of every youth—
Not cheeky—a real Afghan blush.
Pray tell it not in Gath—hush! hush!
For whether men were short or lanky,
Their uniform, so uniformly scanty,
Exposed their legs below the knees,
To face "the battle and the breeze."
Well I remember at Calcutta,
How deep the curses they did mutter,
(I saw some Highlanders arrive)
When fierce mosquitoes all alive,
Settled at once upon their pins;
The sight next day—of calves and shins
Was awful—one you could not match;
For—from the everlasting scratch—
You could not find a single patch
That was not bloody, flayed, and raw:
Fresh legs mosquitoes love to gnaw!
E'en spindle-shanks became in size
Quite elephantine in disguise!

But I have wandered from my story,
From paths which led straight on to glory,
'Tis time to "White" I should return,
For all from him have much to learn!
In Mutiny days, I rather think,
He only stood upon the brink,
Of those dark scenes—for his old Corps,
The Twenty-seventh, no service saw.
But is this true? I quite forget,
Infallible I am not yet!
To History I lay no claim,
That is a point beyond my aim!
A story-teller I may be,
But stick to truth most honestly;
Although the *name* sounds ominous,
And puzzles the incredulous!
His regiment no doubt was sore
That it, with all its "Dogs of War,"
Was not "let slip," "straining for the start,
Like greyhound" with a panting heart,
And longing to be up and at 'em,
Just like the famous brave Lord Chatham!
And had the Chief but let them go,
Woe—woe—unutterable woe,
Had been the inevitable fate
Of rascals with a dusky pate!
Though deaf I hear the Twenty-seventh shout,
And see the Pandies "go about
With my mind's eye," *my only eye!*
And hark, I think I hear their cry,
The Twenty-seventh, ringing cheers, hurrah!—
Hurrah! resounding far—and far
Hurrah! in every swelling gorge
Hurrah for White!—hurrah for George!
'Tis time I quit that phantom scene

Which, as a fact, had never been !
And hasten to the battle-field,
Whereon the Afghans' fate was sealed !
It was a grievous day for me,
When orders from the C.-in-C.
Bade my Highlanders at Kohāt,
For Caubul, sharp, prepare to start !
My loss of course was their great gain,
And so I could not well complain.
Such Corps the country ill could spare
When desperate deeds it had to dare ;
To keep them with the tame reserve,
Was not a fate they did deserve !
That was, at least, the Scotchman's light,
Who had one only thought—to fight !
I honour, from my soul, the man,
Whose proper place was in the van ;
Who felt no doubt he was designed,
For noble deeds—for which he pined :
How these desires were gratified,
Could not by Afghans be denied.
Altho' it cut me to the heart,
With those brave Highlanders to part,
I knew they had their game to play,
And Afghans would repent the day
They ever stood as foes before
The Ninety-second kilted Corps !
How well they fought, all now can tell,
I felt it, when I said farewell !
On Afghan stories I have dwelt,
There's scarce a page I have not spelt ;
I find that in each ticklish fray,
George White had always shown the way.
To speak of Kandahar once more,
Which closed and crowned the Afghan War.

Ayoob, who held supreme command,
Who thrashed us soundly at "Maiwānd,"
Puffed up with pride he, haughty, thought
The British soldiers he had taught,
A lesson which, if learnt in vain,
He must then teach them once again!
And with this view—to stop the way,
Of his advancing reckless prey,
Two villages he strongly manned,
'Twas all astutely, wisely planned;
Exactly what tacticians do,
The road lay just between the two;
The intervals were strongly held,
But soon gave way when fiercely shelled;
And followed by a charge so grand,
That e'en the Ghazies would not stand:
At least discreetly some fell back,
Before the Highlanders' attack;
A nut to crack, and very hard,
Was that strong village "Sahibdād,"
The other stronghold "Gundigān,"
Was held by some renowned Afghan.
The Major, on whose lot it fell
To crack the first unyielding shell,
Had on him thrust a task infernal,
But found himself ere long a "Kernel,"
(With nuts to crack, this modern spelling
Appears most natural and telling!)
These two stiff posts, on left and right,
Opposed our front: Pir Paimal's height,
Was crowned with Afghans on our flank,
Who threatened our unbroken rank,
Awaiting orders, down below,
Prepared to strike the final blow!
To pierce this strong advanced position,

Was then an absolute condition;
For no success, as it appeared,
Could be attained till all was cleared
On heights, and flanks all swept away,
And both the posts in ruins lay;
Till barrier did no longer bar
The road direct to Candahar!
The Highlanders were nobly led,
With White and Brownlow at their head;
Of critical tests each had to bear,
At times his own respective share;
On each well-known distinct occasion,
They won their comrades' admiration!
That "Sahibdād" by rushes stormed,
Was grandly under White performed:
With stubbornness the Afghans fought.
The Gordons (Goorkhas in support)
Would not—brave fellows—be denied,
Untold of obstacles defied.
By perils in every form beset,
Carried the posts with bayonet!
Brownlow, meanwhile, was drawing near
(With Highlanders and Sikhs in rear)
To Gundigān from loop-holed walls;
There met him, then, a shower of balls,
Which for a moment shook his men,
Tangled, cooped up, like sheep in pen,
Amongst the orchards, walls, and banks.
Brownlow perceived the situation,
Without a moment's hesitation,
Regained the front and gave the word,
"Forward," the very last they heard.
Just then the fatal bolt was sped,
Shot through the heart he fell stone dead!
His death filled every breast with sadness,

His men aroused almost to madness ;
Their Highland leader, guide, and friend,
On whom all Scotchmen did depend !
Full vengeance was not long deferred,
To deepest depths their souls were stirred ;
They hurled themselves upon the foe,
And smashed them into utter woe.
Some thousands tried to make a stand,
Against George White's advancing band
Of Gordons, Goorkhas, Pioneers,
Who with triumphant shouts and cheers
Had cleared their front—and in the plain,
Amid the dying and the slain,
Now stood confronting this fresh group,
Of Afghans, but with fiery swoop,
And as "the wolves that headlong go,
Upon the stately buffalo,"
With whirlwind dash and angry roar
Down on that mass our heroes bore.
In less than the twinkling of an eye
The Afghans broke and forced to fly :
Shattered, dispersed, and thousands slain,
Ayooob ne'er dared to stand again !
No chance was given them to rally,
Pell-mell they dashed adown the valley ;
Thus Candahar was stormed and won,
And Roberts' work was nobly done.

THE TWO HEROIC DEEDS WHICH WON THE CROSS

THE example set by one brave man,
Exaggerate you hardly can ;
One act of self-devotion,
Heedless of honours and promotion,

Demoralized the Afghan foe,
Who did without a single blow,
Abandon once a strong position,
To him, who seemed an apparition!
And thus, what might have been a check,
If not a serious fatal wreck,
Which might have darkened History,
Became a glorious Victory,
As I will further on explain,
While dwelling on White's deeds again;
To risk one's life a friend to save
Attests the bravest of the brave.
From such a generous, noble act,
I would not for the world detract;
The impulse prompting men to face,
Appalling dangers, in each case
Presents the same heroic features,
The rescue of one's fellow-creatures!
But soldiers feel their country's fame
Must have on them the primal claim;
Preceding e'en their kith and kin,
If they would hope the "Cross" to win!
And thus *White's service to the State*,
When doubtful seemed the Gordons' fate,
Has ever since appeared to me,
A special act of gallantry;
The value of that glorious deed,
At such a time, in such a need,
The Cross itself would scarce repay!
And this a soldier dares to say!
On the heights of "Charassiah,"
Despite a gun and rifle fire,
The enemy unflinching stood,
Defiant was their attitude;
Nature the post had fortified,

And on its strength the foe relied !
With "White" in front, away they went,
Those Gordons, up that steep ascent ;
From ridge to ridge they did not stop
Until they reached the very top !
Exhausted then, they paused for breath
Before they fought for life and death,
But "White"—impatient would not brook,
Delay an instant—rifle took,
And single-handed dashed ahead
And shot the Afghan leader dead !
This daring act so scared the men
That they retreated there and then.
On other feats I could enlarge,
At Kandahar he led a charge,
Forward he rushed and seized a gun,
By this brave act the day was won ;
For Afghans were not born nor bred
To face such foes—so turned and fled.
These were the two heroic deeds,
Of which one now so proudly reads ;
By which our bosoms still are stirred,
For which his Cross was then conferred !
All scenes of battle, bloody red,
Will now be painted "White," 'tis said.
I cannot vouch for this, I own,
But all agree, it is well known,
The deeds for which the Cross he won
I have not "coloured"—no—not one !

GENERAL SIR J. HILLS-JOHNES,
G.C.B., V.C.

THE "vales" and "plains" no doubt can show
Some men renowned for pluck and go ;
Dangers, prepared to do and dare,
And with their neighbours take their share.
But from the "hills" MY heroes hail,
And, long as "Jemmies" shall not fail,
These "hills" will always famous be,
Never without a brave V.C. !
How Jemmy nobly won his spurs,
Is tale which every bosom stirs ;
Heroic Jem, on him we dwell,
His deeds have scarce a parallel ;
How that his foes a Tartar caught,
When they that day with Jemmy fought.
It was a glorious victory,
And long will live in history.
Our Hero (thus the story runs)
Saw swooping down upon his guns,
Some horsemen, who so close had got,
There was no time to fire a shot ;
And ill his gunners must have fared,
Surprised—and wholly unprepared—
Had Jemmy not, with dauntless pluck,
Though single-handed, charged the ruck ;
Into the rebel ranks he dashed,
And right and left away he slashed ;

This gave his men the time to rally,
Each in his own defence to parry ;
The first effect of that wild rush,
By which the rebels thought to crush,
Our men, before they could present
A front, their onset to prevent :
Invaluable was that lead,
Magnificent, heroic deed !
One moment, at the coming shock,
Our gunners flinched, then as a rock,
They stood—and at the rebels hurled
Defiance as away they whirled ;
And they who came to slay were slain,
None ever tried that game again !
One half their numbers there lay dead,
The other half turned tail and fled !
To that staunch front which Jemmy showed,
The gunners their salvation owed.
Just then, the slightest hesitation,
And all were lost—annihilation,
Their sure inevitable fate :
Their rally would have been too late.
Inspired by Jem, and him alone,
Both front and rear, they held their own ;
Besiegers the besieged became,
Which seemed to them an “up-hill ” game,
Jemmy and Hills and Johnes combined,
The three in one for war inclined !
And when those horsemen made that swoop,
They little knew ’twas Jemmy’s troop.
Set on by three ferocious rebels,
Stiff work to face his foes in trebles,
Two of these rascals Jem laid low,
And by their speedy overthrow,
He thought the third one surely must

With ease be made to bite the dust :
This view he promptly did discard,
His task he found exceeding hard ;
His stalwart foe had strength and skill,
An awkward customer to kill !
Accustomed trenchant arms to wield,
No man, he said, should see him yield !
And Jem he did intend to slay,
A fate Jem did his best to stay !
He had a scheme, brave little man,
To baffle that stout Pandý's plan ;
But adverse fate appeared to thwart
Our Hero—as he bravely fought ;
For he in meshes then was caught,
From which himself he could not free,
He was in mortal agony !
For whilst the fight swayed to and fro,
Our Jem became collapsed in woe ;
He had "his martial cloak around him,"
And in its folds so tight it bound him,
And so compressed his throttled neck
That it began his breath to check :
And thus so painfully entangled,
He near as possible was strangled !
Involved in many awkward twists,
He could not use his sword or fists ;
He seemed just then at Pandý's mercy,
And if Jem did perchance say curse ye,
His language was I fear profane,
He won't, I know, use it again !
A figure in the distance looms,
And hastening up, 'twas Henry Tombs,
Who shot the scoundrel through the head,
Atop of Jemmy he fell dead ;
"Tombs" from the jaws of that dark "Tomb,"

Saved Jemmy from his awful doom!
This fight I think should not be "cloaked,"
'Twas from that "cloak" Jem nearly choked!
With respiration in such grief,
To cut his throat had been relief;
Half strangled, in the gasp of death,
Jem scarcely could inhale his breath!
His neck set free from that great strain,
Jemmy was glad to breathe again!
Thus spared from further squeaks and ills,
Emerged unscathed brave Jemmy Hills.
The Cross of Valour, need I say,
He won that ever glorious day!
Jemmy excelled at fisticuffs,
As he had proved to sundry roughs,
And boys at school, who said of Jem,
It can't be hard to wallop him!
But all were sorry when, too late,
They found our Jemmy's strength so great!
For though he was in stature small,
Contrived he did to reach the tall,
And when it came to serious blows,
Jem's foes retired with broken nose,
And blackened eyes—all over sore,
Preferring much to fight no more!
I should attribute his success,
If I may be allowed to guess,
Not only to his vigorous arm,
Which might, no doubt, produce a qualm,
Not e'en to pugilistic art,
But to his stout and dauntless heart!
Some may perhaps remember still
The fight which did the papers fill,
Which set all British hearts aglow.
Prize-fighting, then, was all the go

"Heenan," the great Benicia boy,
The Yankee's giant, pride, and joy,
Who came to snatch the champion's belt,
From Tommy Sayers—and we felt
The odds were fearful, five feet eight,
'Gainst six feet two, and double weight!
"Heenan unmatched for breadth and length,"
"Had in his chest unpleasant strength";
"But Sayers with his bull-dog breed,
"Which well each practised eye could read,"
For Heenan's might cared not a pin,
Resolved to go straight in and win!
"Though his right arm, that arm of pride,"
Lay broken, dangling by his side,
Two mortal hours Tom Sayers fought,
Nor gave his crippled limb a thought;
How stout our hero kept the belt,
"And how the ladies' hearts did melt,
"Long shall that glorious tale be told"
How Tom the Yankee-doodle sold,
How Heenan with his eyes bunged up
Had drunk his last prize-fighting cup,
How blind as any mortal bat,
He chucked up both the sponge and hat!
This is the grandest illustration,
Of bull-dog pluck, determination,
Unyielding, stubborn, stick-to-him style,
Found only in the British Isle!
Models of pluck, who won't give in,
Heroes tho' small, are bound to win.
Sayers and Jemmy of one mould
For fighting annals are enrolled,
The finest bruisers of the day,
So friends of Jem and Sayers say!

LANDLORDS (CIVIL AND EX-MILITARY)

SOME "fine old English gentlemen"
We see amongst us now and then,
Who, when their soldier's work is done,
Take to their rod, their horse, and gun,
And sit at home so much at ease,
And do whate'er their sweet wills please ;
He daily takes his four square meals,
For which his appetite appeals,
A wholesome custom, does one good,
Improves the morals and the blood ;
He lives on produce of his farm
(In country life, this is the charm),
On ploughshares, keener than on swords,
Bucolic prizes he awards,
To farmers who disclose the way,
To make the wheat and turnips pay !
As Justice stern upholds the law,
Offences probes, to thieves a bore ;
He's hard on poachers, men unpleasant,
Who shoot his partridge, hare, and pheasant ;
To men who drink his home-brewed beer,
Without the right, he's most severe,
He's down upon the heavy poor-rates,
And feeds the starved and hungry curates !
No wonder that the poor look pale,
Who can't afford a pint of ale,

When all the waters that they drink
 From ditches come, and often stink!
 No wonder children keep so warm,
 When *in one room* so many swarm!
 Together herd and romp and squall,
 The grown-up lads and lasses all.
 Why should they shiver—young and old—
 When trained so well to bear the cold!
 With paneless windows, roofs with holes,
 With only rags to hide their souls!
 What self-denial it must be,
 When poor old crones, who live on tea
 (That life-sustaining beverage),
 Though three-score years and ten their age,
 Have no sweet milk of any kind,
 They murmur not—but yet they mind,
 Ladies in satin and in silk
 They think might spare a drop of milk!
 With crops so closely mown and clean,
 There is not much for them to glean;
 With scarce a blade upon the land,
 The gleaners have a freeish hand.
 They do their best by this concession,
 It leaves on them a poor impression,
 And gratitude does not express,
 Their feelings quite, I must confess!
 Such was the Squire in days gone by,
 As I in truth can testify;
 He thought as much of his own poor,
 As of the beggars at his door,
 Who, famished, just a morsel craves,
 On level with the abject slaves.
 Joking apart, I have no doubt
 All other landlords Jem cuts out,
 And naught like this at any rate

Exists on Jemmy's own estate !
That Jemmy's agricultural corps,
Was never ruled I know before
By kinder, more indulgent chief,
Anxious to give the poor relief.
To make all those beneath his sway
Content and glad the live-long day :
That is his object—I'll be bound,
To test its truth—go, look around !
Altho' no landlord I may be,
And never owned a rood or tree ;
Yet, my familiar designation,
Denotes a landlord's occupation,
As those will find who may inquire,
All friends address me as "the Squire."

GENERAL SIR DIGHTON PROBYN,
G.C.B., V.C.

UPON Victoria's roll of fame,
See Dighton Probyn's honoured name!
Amid the heroes of our land,
More brilliant who? or who more grand?
From *our* Light Cavalry he hailed,
Woe worth the day "Grey Jackets" failed
Within their ranks to hold him fast,
(With us at first his lot was cast).
It is indeed a joy to me,
To dwell on Probyn's gallantry!
Each step in his most glorious course
Shed lustre on "The Probyn Horse";
"Irregulars" would go ahead,
And anywhere by Probyn led:
That point I do not here contest,
It matters not which I like best.
In his success I did rejoice,
But "Regular" I was by choice!
I speak of times that long have flown
Before the present corps were known.
His acts of gallantry, 'tis said,
Were legion—this I lately read:
The record is before me now,
Which his heroic deeds avow.

Cavalry leaders all unite,
To claim him matchless in a fight !
This tribute was endorsed by one,
Of England's sons—excelled by none.
The Soldier Grant, Sir Hope, I mean,
A General, as a trooper keen,
And just the man to give a lead,
To Horsemen in the hour of need !
'Twas on his staff I served awhile,
Remember well his fighting style ;
Go straight ahead, it seemed to me,
Was his distinct propensity !
With his Hussars I once cut in,
But failed his notice then to win.
No wonder—for I only did,
Like others ; tried my best to rid,
The world of fiends, who at Cawnpore,
Deluged our Christian homes in gore.
Butchers, who spared nor wife nor daughter,
But revelled in their brutal slaughter.
Who can conceive, and much less tell,
The horrors of the Cawnpore Well ;
When with some Lancers that same day,
Scathless I issued from the fray ?
The fact is, Pandies on the hop
Pursued by horsemen seldom stop :
On foot they were, and went the pace,
But we on horseback won the race.
It is, I think, a maxim true
That equine legs will beat our two.
Contrast the part I had to play
With Probyn's—rebels ran away
From me, and in their headlong flight,
They had no stomach for the fight ;
They seemed impressed with one sole thought,

That they perchance might not be caught ;
In fact, they had but one design,
To save their lives, and not take mine !
As I believe I charged straight home,
No doubt I did astonish some,
But as the slashing came from me,
And nothing from the enemy,
And as my foes were mere tag-rag,
I had not much on which to brag.
Connected with Sir Hope Grant's staff,
I must have met my comrades' chaff ;
I hope I humbly did submit,
And did not care one little bit :
E'en though the jeers were rude and rough,
I can't deny I proved a muff.
I'll now describe the awful mull,
I made upon a Pandy's skull ;
I would not for a moment mask,
The way that I discharged the task,
Which did one day devolve on me
When Grant achieved a victory.
As I my puny self recall,
I mix up great things with the small,
Contrast our Probyn's grand success,
With mine, a duffer, I confess ;
But as my blunder he will find
Did not hurt him, he will not mind,
Especially as he knows his friend
Must now be getting near his end !
At least one looks not much ahead,
When three-score years and ten are sped,
Still less, when he exceeds the span
Allotted to the age of man !
I said unwounded was my state,
But this is scarcely accurate

I must admit, to be precise,
That I received a trifling slice
From my own sword, an awkward act!
Perhaps I ought to veil the fact.
I sought to crack a Pandy's crown,
But as I tried to cut him down,
He bobbed and fell; I missed my aim,
And slap upon my foot I came.
The wound was really very slight,
It just brought blood, was soon all right.
If little toes could only speak
It would have owned a narrow squeak;
Disabled I was not a day,
So do not pity me, I pray!
But as the wound by self was got,
"Returned as wounded" I was not!
Sword-cut on foot had sounded well,
If I the secret did not tell.
But then there was, I felt, a doubt
That I the fact might chance let out!
My tongue I think was most unruly,
And apt to wag and prate unduly.
I owned it was my sword that failed,
And thus the truth intact prevailed;
My fault 'twas tempting to conceal,
The truth I'm glad I did reveal.
With this digression I hark back,
And get again on Probyn's track;
His fierce assailants proved a stamp
Unlike my foes who did decamp,
Who did incontinently fly,
When charged by British cavalry!
But Infantry composed the force
We met—whereas the Rebel Horse
Which Probyn charged were men, I feel,

More worthy of his trenchant steel!
In Grant's despatches we are told
He fought like Paladin of old;
The splendid kudos he attained,
Was by his dauntless valour gained.
'Gainst six Sowars beset one day,
He had to fight his desperate way,
And two assailants low he laid,
Before his men came to his aid!
Probyn in single combat slew,
Another Sepoy, who 'tis true,
Fought for his life with such a skill,
E'en Probyn found him hard to kill:
And ere the rebel bit the dust,
Through Probyn's wrist his bayonet thrust,
And wounded too, his faithful steed;
But 'twas so slight, there was no need
To lay him up—he soon was fit,
As if he never had been hit.
Probyn, his valiant deeds to crown,
A standard-bearer once cut down,
Who in defiance dared to flout
His flag—him Dighton singled out,
And like our Bobs, with lightning blow,
He laid the haughty rebel low;
And with the standard, he that day,
In triumph proudly rode away!
And this he did within the sight,
Of all assembled in that fight.
A Sikh old warrior in this strife,
Preserved his noble leader's life;
His strong right arm he interposed,
And stayed the blow which must have closed
Sir Dighton Probyn's grand career;
Assailed by rebels front and rear,

But while his object he achieved,
That Sikh a mortal wound received ;
A finer soldier ne'er drew breath,
Or met a more devoted death.
Sir Dighton on his feats is dumb,
And down on me perhaps will come,
When he finds out I have retold,
His prowess in the days of old ;
The brave I know are always mute ;
That is a truth beyond dispute !
Objections to a comrade's praise
Are now, my friend, too late to raise !
Thou gav'st us by thy deeds occasion,
To shower on thee our admiration !
Though thou a hero wouldst not be,
Heroic deeds were done by thee :
If History does this fact proclaim,
Thou hast thyself alone to blame !

LORD KITCHENER, G.C.B.

By many it was long professed,
One only General¹ we possessed,
But "Bobs," so little and so great,
Has done a service to the State,
For which an endless debt is due,
If immortality be true !
Since then a bright Egyptian Star,
That grand all-conquering "Sirdar,"
Has all around such lustre shed,
Each hero hides his smaller head !
This star, in magnitude the first,
Makes others feel themselves accursed !
In history's page no battles can
"Atbara" beat or "Omdurman" !
I did not in my Eton days,
Devote myself to warlike lays ;
Of Latin studies and of Greek
I would with hesitation speak !
The words that sealed the Mahdi's fate
I could perhaps at sight translate :
I mean the "veni, vidi, vici,"
If wrong, I fain would cry "peccavi,"
Lord Kitchener had, I'm sure, in mind,
The speech by Cæsar thus defined !

¹ Lord Wolseley.

When Kitcheners in kitchens look,
Of course the Mahdi's goose they cook !
When they Khaleefas overthrow,
Of course like fighting cocks they crow.
If this be pure frivolity,
It savours of that jollity,
Which thrills right through the "Sirdar's" breast
As he surveys the long oppressed
"Sudān," now free—well may he boast,
The downfall of the Mahdi's host !
Behold one universal smile,
Prevails throughout the blessed Nile !
With grateful song, and with one voice,
Thousand, ten thousand hearts rejoice ;
To thee all honour they accord,
This, this, Sirdar, is thy reward !
That hell upon Egyptian earth,
For ever gone—a second birth,
Has now revived that joyous theme,
When King Osiris ruled supreme,
Spread peace and joy and cultivation,
Throughout the whole Egyptian nation ;
But after such reforms at home,
'Twas rash in him so far to roam—
Had he, like Kitchener, held his post,
He wouldn't have given up the ghost—
Osiris was so good, humane,
None but a fratricidal Cain,
Or "Typhon," monster, rather worse,
Whom all the world still deeply curse,
Could foully slay an only brother,
The son of his devoted mother !
In foreign parts he was waylaid,
By Typhon into mincemeat made ;
To cut him up in pieces small,

Was the "unkindest cut of all."
 That "Typhon" was supposed to be
 The cause of all the misery
 That wretched Egypt overtook,
 The fact we must not overlook ;
 For Typhon, called the "Crocodile,"
 Preceded Mahdis on the Nile,
 Who were such brutes, that I infer,
 The cruel Typhon, murderer,
 With Mahdis must have been allied,
 In blood—for both were deeply dyed
 As fiends in those abhorrent crimes,
 In recent and in olden times !
 Bless thee, Kitchener, brave and hardy,
 Who swept away that wicked Mahdi !
 Prosperity now and comfort reign,
 And Egypt is herself again !
 At least her speedy renovation,
 Is hastening towards that consummation !
 Already she—long trodden down—
 Has learnt to bless the British Crown.
 When Tommy Moore, the poet, wrote,
 (Those lines of his I often quote,)
 Then Egypt had not crossed his mind,
 And no "Elysiums" could he find !
 But now if "Tommy," "more" or less,
 Could see new Egypt's grand success,
 He'd sing, as he beheld her bliss,
 "Elysium on earth"—is this—is this ?
 Lord Kitchener is on every tongue,
 The idol he, of old and young !
 When that refulgent star arose,
 It led our country to suppose
 All other stars must now be set,
 We "Bobs" and Wolseley should forget !

But them, whilst valour holds its own,
A Kitchener e'en shall not dethrone!
The deeds of these resistless three,
Recall our ancient history.
I place Great Cæsar first of these,
And then I note Miltiades;
Leonidas appears the last,
Three classic heroes of the past.
Others there are like Hannibal,
And Alexander chief of all,
On second thoughts occur to me,
But space is left for only three.
And even these great men of war,
Emblazoned in the classic lore,
Must stand aside and somewhat pale,
When we with one acclaim all hail,
Our Roberts, Wolseley, and Sirdar,
Khartoum, Crimea, Kundahar!
From Egypt's grand, renowned Campaign,
This moral we I think obtain,
That from the Scientific Corps,
We draw our finest men of war;
With some experience I declare,
Sappers are first to do and dare!
What finer warrior in his day,
Than Napier of Magdala, pray?
A soldier, who would make a name,
Would reach the highest rung of fame,
Must first become, in his career,
Like Kitchener, an Engineer!

THREE CLASSIC HEROES

CÆSAR

FOR Cæsar's conquests and his deeds,
The modern school-boy daily bleeds;
He's flogged if once he wrongly names,
Three hundred fights which Cæsar claims!
Small wonder that the youthful mind,
Has thoughts of Cæsar most unkind!
Indeed, the third form boy asserts,
That Cæsar met with his deserts,
When close by Pompey's monument,
He fell, his mighty spirit rent,
By Brutus and by Cassius,
By Casca and Ligrarius;
Those villains of the deepest dye,
Condemned to all eternity!
His Alexandrian Campaign,
I really cannot read again.
Boys (flogged or not) in every station,
Are filled with pride and emulation,
Whene'er they hear of victories won,
By Kitchener or Wellington!
And Kitchener's triumphs, I am sure,
Longer than Cæsar's will endure.
If some Egyptian walls could speak,
They'd tell of a domestic freak,

Kept rather dark in Cæsar's days,
(I can't exclude it from my lays).
Cæsar in war was brave and strong,
But weak in morals (that was wrong),
And sacrificed his martial fame,
To love's devouring, quenchless flame !
For though they said of Cæsar's line,
That all its members were divine,
Cæsar, poor soul, was very human,
And yielded to a pretty woman !
'Twas scandalous (so they said at Rome),
For Cæsar had a spouse at home !
And she, if we believe tradition,
Was always high above suspicion !
Now though I give this information,
Of Cæsar's strange infatuation,
I cannot think the Romans knew,
So much as either I—or you !
Their reading public—it was small,
Of journals there were none at all.
Cæsar himself was Cæsar's censor,
Of news he was the sole dispenser ;
Gossip, small talk, and old wives' fables,
Fulfilled the part of modern cables ;
And so the Romans were not told,
How Cæsar had his honour sold :
How he, although a man of arms,
Was crazed by Cleopatra's charms !
Now Cæsar's lust of power was great,
To curb the nobles, rule the state,
And be a mighty potentate,
Such was the trend of his ambition,
Had Fate not hindered its fruition ;
And this she did most cruelly,
By dark and foul conspiracy !

To Cæsar, Brutus owed his breath,
And yet he wrought his saviour's death.
At least, by all it was so thought,
For Brutus had against him fought;
And Cæsar nobly him forgave,
And intervened his life to save!
"An honourable man" and good,
Him Cæsar always understood!
But Anthony did not agree,
As big a brute, as well could be;
Brutus he thought, and he said so,
When Brutus was inclined to crow,
Over the murdered Emperor,
Whom he, the chief conspirator,
Had helped upon that fatal day,
With traitor's bloody hands to slay!
Ye Gods, how Cæsar loved his friend,
And would have loved him to the end:
But vanquished by ingratitude,
With broken heart he sadly stood,
When Brutus joined the brutal strife,
And raised aloft his treacherous knife,
Cæsar could scarce believe his eyes,
To see him 'mongst his enemies.
"Tu quoque Brute" (brute), he said;
Then "muffling up" his stricken head,
Which ran with blood, great Cæsar fell.
How great the loss, O! who can tell;
His "mighty heart" could not but burst!
No wonder he the Brutus cursed:
To slay his dearest friend was bad,
Enough to drive poor Cæsar mad!
He was not sent to his long rest,
Because on Cleopatra's breast,
He hung—for Brutus was above,

Those sentiments of love,
Which often lead the brave to stray ;
At least they did in Cæsar's day.
I say that Brutus was not jealous,
But for his country's good so zealous,
And hating Cæsar's great ambition,
He sent him straightway to perdition !
And if in any future strife,
His country should require his life,
Ready he kept that self-same dagger,
He vowed ; but this I thought was swagger !
At last upon his sword he fell,
If I aright the story tell,
And with his latest breath he cried,
As in his bitterness he died,
"Virtue, thou art an empty name" ;
He felt it, I suppose, a shame,
That she had not enhanced his fame !
How many since have held that view,
Convinced to them that more was due !
He would be greater, each asserts,
If he had only his deserts !
Of Cleopatra's fate we know,
It closed in hopeless grief and woe ;
From fangs of that empoisoned asp,
She breathed her last expiring gasp !
The serpent was in *her* no doubt,
And Cæsar must have found her out ;
For she beguiled him from the hour,
That he first saw and felt her power !
"The serpent old" the soldier spoils,
If once he gets him in his toils ;
See how he coiled himself round Eve,
The effects of which we still perceive !
In my old age, confess I must,

That Adam's sons I should distrust,
If tested by the same temptations,
Which ruin those in regal stations.
Cæsar was weak, and had his faults,
Could not resist bare-faced assaults !
But as a soldier none stood higher,
And none whom Romans more admire.
With Cæsar's fate before us all,
If we would not incur a fall,
We should "when in our hour of ease"
Avoid "the coy," who love to tease,
Or please us, as the case may be,
With those inclined to frailty.
For Cleopatras still exist,
To whom the brave too often list ;
From Cæsar's weakness warning take,
You must lie in the bed you make !
Had Cleopatra not appeared,
From many stains he had been cleared !
Seduced or not by Egypt's Queen,
Not less a soldier he had been !
For leader he was born and bred,
And victory followed where he led.
Before I end, take my advice,
Syrens suspect, however nice,
In Cæsar's path of glory stay,
From paths of dalliance keep away.
Of Cleopatra's wiles beware,
Of her enchantments have a care,
This would be Cæsar's own refrain,
If he to life could come again.

MILTIADES

I HAVE one other tale to tell,
On which Athenians love to dwell;
Which brought to them immortal fame,
And Persians put to utter shame.
'Twas he who nobly led the way,
On Marathon's eventful day;
To him Athenians all deferred,
Whene'er their blood was fiercely stirred,
For questions both of peace and war,
Were left to his unerring law!
Whate'er decree by him was made,
With due submission was obeyed.
In Persians he inspired such dread,
One hundred thousand from him fled,
Although his force, when all were scored,
Reached not a tenth of Persia's horde!
The only *one* reward he sought,
For which he had so bravely fought,
An olive crown to deck his brow,
His country this would not allow!
And while this guerdon they refused,
His great presumption they abused!
Ingratitude elsewhere I've shown,
Extends to countries like our own;
How ill-requited "Lumsden" went
To his long home—his life all spent
In winning many an Eastern fight,
Thus building up old England's might;
All those who knew the famous "Joe,"
On him would boundless praise bestow.
Whilst Greek and Roman chiefs they scan,
They swear by this grand Englishman!

O! Athens lost to sense of shame,
Cruelty ought to be thy name!
Miltiades thou didst abuse,
And scandalously didst accuse,
Of charges vile, without a shade,
Of reason, by some villains made!
Miltiades and Wellington,
With Waterloo and Marathon,
Are themes we love to dwell upon,
Which set all soldiers' hearts on fire,
Will last until the world expire!
That Leader, once the boast and pride,
Of Athens, miserably died,
Of wounds received at Paros' Isle,
Which had defied him for a while:
Miltiades at last recoiled,
And raised the siege, completely foiled.
This failure brought on him disgrace,
Which previous deeds would not efface!
The fact is—and I speak the truth,
That "jealousy with rankling truth"
Had then begun to "inly know"
The hearts of peers who felt they saw,
In him their master, and they all,
Would look by him obscure and small!
And so the spiteful all combined,
With one concerted, crafty mind,
That from his pinnacle of fame,
He should descend: and his great name,
No longer should retain the place,
As foremost of the Grecian race!
A Hero he, surpassed by none,
Was by his kith and kin undone!
His fickle countrymen forgot,
To him they owed their envious lot:

He was the source of all their power,
His people blessed him every hour !
For after Marathon in Greece,
For long there reigned unbroken peace ;
While fortune smiled, he was a treasure,
Whose worth no mortal man could measure.
But at the very first reverse,
Their idol they began to curse ;
Charged him with treason and with crimes,
Of which we doubt in modern times !
In prison him they fast confined,
And more than once his death designed :
Nor would they free him till was paid,
The ransom which on him was laid.
And when he died, he was so poor,
His son at some kind neighbour's door,
Had there to beg the wherewithal,
To clear his father's funeral !
Such was the fate of him who won,
The brilliant field of Marathon !

LEONADAS

WHO has not read the stirring versions,
Of Xerxes and his countless Persians :
Of his o'erwhelming fierce invasion,
Of Greece, that noble, dauntless nation ?
Do not the ancient legends ring,
With feats of Lacedæmon's King,
When his heroic Spartan band,
Did Xerxes three whole days withstand ?
Till overborne by treachery,
All perished at Thermopolæ,

(Excepting two—a traitor one
Who later on to death was done).
And how he spurned with indignation,
How back he hurled with detestation
Those bribes, his native land to sell;
Some demons may be bribed in Hell,
Not Lace—dæmons on the earth,
Not those at least of kingly birth!
Of questions demoniacal,
A soldier I know naught at all!
When Xerxes first that rabble saw,
Three hundred soldiers brave but raw,
Humane he told his men to strive
To seize them as they stood alive:
How little did that monarch know,
The mettle of his Spartan foe!
Bitter the fruit that nations reap,
Which vainly hold their foemen cheap
Soldiers by scores have thus been lost,
What has it not our country cost?
O'er-weening confidence, I say,
Is very fine—but does not pay!
It is a grievous fault, no doubt,
Which Englishmen are finding out.
We are too apt, as Islanders,
To look with scorn on foreigners,
And fancy that we must be right,
That we alone know how to fight!
If Xerxes was like us—unwise—
Inclined the enemy to despise,
Those Heroes him a lesson taught
For never was a battle fought,
With more devoted bravery,
Than Spartans at Thermopolæ!
Inured to fortitude from youth,

To honour, purity, and truth :
To cultivate all feats of valour,
And undertake all works of labour,
Which tended to success in arms,
Such works for them had always charms.
But labour must be void of *trade*,
For trade the Spartan laws forbade ;
At least, they thought it did degrade,
For war alone was his profession,
The spoils of war his one possession ;
Hardened by rough and scanty fare,
Accustomed every risk to dare ;
Exposed to climates hot or cold,
Envyng no man's stores or gold !
By self-inflicted flagellations,
Heedless of pain and (such sensations)
And bloated luxury and sloth,
A sturdy Spartan spurned them both.
'Twas then was played the "Spartan Game,"
Which gave her sons a world-wide fame ;
With "Games" all manly feats were blended,
For which the free-born youth contended :
Their dauntless intrepidity,
Attested their nativity !
In ancient days who could not trace,
One of the true-born Spartan race ?
The Spartan always played a part,
Which touched a chord in England's heart ;
Their love of sport and manly games,
Their love of liberty inflames :
The Britisher so wont to rave,
That he will never be a slave !
In independence he will reign,
No power on earth shall him restrain :
Inflexible, and bold, and stern,

Were just the attributes we learn,
Which swayed with dominating hold,
The Spartan race in days of old !
Each feature in its noblest form,
In peace and war, in calm and storm,
Stood out conspicuous, in relief,
In that grand Lacedæmon Chief!
When he went forth to lead the strife,
Which was he felt to end his life,
He then enjoined on his fond wife,
"To marry—and to bring forth seed,
Worthy of his illustrious breed!"
This exhortation ere the fight,
Our Generals would not think quite right ;
He told them all "to hearty dine,
As they would sup on Pluto's wine."
Temples were raised to his great name,
And festivals, with one acclaim,
Were held to honour, reverence, and praise
The Hero of those ancient days!
But hark—I hear the Spartan sing,
Of Lacedæmon's noble King!
Echoing from each fervent tongue,
That song enraptures old and young ;
There's music and sweet melody
In that one word—Thermopolæ :
Each sunny youth and bonny lass
Still worships thee—Leonadas.

FOUR HEROES

*WHO HAVE NOT RECEIVED THE DECORATION OF THE
VICTORIA CROSS*

WERE I required to men elect,
For valour's Cross, I should select,
These four—three wear the G.C.B.,
But none the coveted V.C.,
Altho' they earned it comrades say
Who knew them in their fighting day.

GENERAL SIR CHARLES BROWNLOW, G.C.B.

CHARLES BROWNLOW—"Browne" like "Sam"¹ you see
A V.C. warrior ought to be!
The brilliant leader at "Umbeylah"
With fitting comrade, Rennell Taylor!
The history of the Punjab age,
Proclaims their praise in every page!
In one of those recurring fights,
Which blood-stained oft the Momund heights,
Brownlow a fine example set,
Which none who saw it can forget:
I tell the tale as told to me,
Within the hour of victory!

¹ Sir Samuel Browne, V.C.

We Horsemen cursed our luckless star,
Which kept us from that fight so far,
That though we heard the roar and rattle,
We could not see the field of battle.
Inactive thus constrained to stand,
To comrades lend no helping hand,
It was a cruel, hard condition,
I own I chafed in that position !
With Tantalus our torments vied,
If Classics have not grossly lied !
Under his all-inspiring spell,
His men rushed on—but Charlie fell :
A bullet smote him to the ground
Just as the summit he had crowned :
To follow Brownlow's lead that day
And take my share in that affray,
I hoped—but orders over night,
To scour the plain beneath the height,
With Troopers of my Indian Horse,
Spoilt all my little game, of course !
For long I waited in the plain,
For fugitives—but all in vain,
For none attempted to retreat,
Within the limits of my beat !
Mad with my inglorious lot,
While fighting thus was raging hot,
Posting my Troopers down below,
To cut off any lurking foe ;
I then began to climb the hill,
Where man to man fought fiercely still ;
As up I crawled, a little throng,
Of wounded men were borne along,—
For them what mortal skill could do,
Was done—poor fellows brave and true.
Just then I paused for want of breath,

And thought of those so near to death!
Of those, at least, who passed me by,
For some, I fear, were doomed to die.
I came across a dhooly closed,
The curtain raised, and there reposed,
A form, which seemed at first to me,
A relic of humanity!
'Twas Charlie Brownlow—there he lay,
The Hero of that brilliant day;
I thought I saw his dying gasp,
He seemed in death's remorseless grasp—
Give in? Not he, until the last,
I knew; but life seemed ebbing fast:
Speechless and faint he almost swooned,
And pointed feebly to his wound!
Shot through the lungs, he should have died
But he was spared—he death defied:
And stoutly still he holds his own,
A better Soldier ne'er was known.
Yes! through the lungs the ball had passed,
A day or two would be his last
I thought—and this I sadly wrote,
(My very letter now I quote)
As seated by his dying bed,
His gallant spirit would have fled,
I felt, before my fatal speech,
Could many of his comrades reach.
With Charles I told them they must part,
The pride of every Brownlow heart:
At least, I told his friends, I durst
Only prepare them for the worst—
In prime of life he might recover,
But these my fears I must not smother!
'Tis strange this dark and deathlike page
Came back to me in my old age,

From one near member to another
It wandered till it reached the brother—
Sir Charles, who sent it on to me,
And I preserve it carefully;
The date, September fifty-four (1854),
And I am verging on four score!

GENERAL HARRY LUMSDEN, K.C.S.I.

As on some warriors I reflect,
Condemned to undeserved neglect,
'Tis hard indeed to understand,
That e'en our own old fatherland,
Has left her heroes in the cold,
(This cruel tale has just been told¹).
To Harry Lumsden I allude,
Who met with base ingratitude:
A grander soldier ne'er drew sword,
And yet, consider his reward!
For six long years left "unemployed,"
His prospects blighted—then destroyed!
A post was offered him at last,
To late, too late—his day was past;
When England spurns her sons like these,
We wonder not, Miltiades
Was treated so unworthily,
What I might call so scurvily!
That Harry Lumsden should have died,
With martial honours all denied,
Without C.B. or K.C.B.
Was shameful, downright infamy!
Greeks might perhaps be treated so,
But Harry never—Joe?—no, no!

¹ By Peter Lumsden.

All those who knew Joe Lumsden well,
Thought Peter¹ had a tale to tell,
Which would in every heart excite,
A feeling of intense delight,
As page succeeding page one reads
Of Harry Lumsden's glorious deeds!
All attributes in him combined,
To form a Leader of mankind!
And chiefly as the famous "Guide,"
On whom the Punjab all relied!
A cut above his peers he seemed,
None more admired, none more esteemed.
Peter, full fifty years ago,
Under your glorious brother Joe,
The mounted Guides I might have led,
But "Harding" took my place instead.
My own loved Corps I could not leave,
To it my heart did fondly cleave:
Its Adjutant I longed to be,
That post just then was offered me;
From prizes two I had to choose,
The Guides at last I did refuse.
To part with either I was loth,
And wished I could have held them both!
I wonder how I should have fared,
Had I my lot with "Harry" shared?
A name, perhaps, I might have won,
As Guides when spared have always done—
Or else I might have "gone before,"
The fate of many in that Corps.
A grand example Harry set,
And hosts of comrades deep regret,
A model of such self-devotion,
With honours scant—and bare promotion—

¹ He has just written his brother's life, and sent me a copy.

Has gone! Ah! well, brave Joe, adored,
Thou now hast reaped thy just reward!

SIR HENRY NORMAN, G.C.B.

THE ancient "Briton" may have been,
The noblest fellow ever seen,
The modern "Norman" I prefer,
To him I should my views defer!
With brilliant deeds like his I swear,
Barbaric men cannot compare!
His feats in war, and work in peace,
Shall last till Henry's like shall cease:
How few in History's page appear,
To rival his unique career!
Modest, and brave, and true combined,
In him are features well defined;
No hero of himself thinks less,
No others he would thus assess;
Statesman enlightened, warrior grand,
Foremost in this our native land.
A tale of valour now I'll tell,
Which Norman's oldest friends know well:
Sir Henry then a beardless boy,
With bounding step and eager joy,
To rescue some poor wounded men,
Disabled, and exposed just then,
To certain death—he nobly came;
That deed now swells the roll of fame.
He dauntless scaled the frowning hill,
The thought of which enchains me still,
That fearless, cool, and daring act,
Napier (Sir Charles) proclaimed the fact,
In burning words, with which he fired,

The souls of those whom he inspired !
Think of those helpless, hopeless men,
Half screened within a hillside den,
Left there to die by sheer starvation,
By sword or some abomination :
Within a stone's quite easy throw,
Rushing down, the cruel foe
Would in a trice have found their prey,
If Norman had not stopped the way.
But haply they were not aware
Our men lay at their mercy there.
But Norman saw their sad condition,
And with a soldier's prompt decision,
By God, I'll know the reason why,
If those poor lads are left to die !
And calling loud for volunteers,
Men like himself, who knew no fears,
Up, up they spring with one intent
To forge their way to that ascent,
Where in the agony of death
Some then were drawing their last breath !
That desperate onslaught (who could stem)
Affridies thought too much for them ;
They therefore deemed it best to flee,
And thus they set the captives free !
That deed of valour unsurpassed
With soldiers shall for ever last ;
The Cross Sir Henry does not hold,
It was not worn in days of old !

SIR DONALD STEWART, G.C.B.¹

WITH Donald Stewart now I deal,
A friend I think as true as steel ;
We were such jolly Subs together,
And shall be friends I hope for ever !
All V.C men must be ashamed,
When he, Field Marshal, is not named !
V.C. escutcheons must be rare
When men like "Donald" are not there !
His ride to Delhi seemed to me,
Worthy each day of one V.C. ;
His life he carried in his hand,
Prepared to make his final stand
At any moment, if to die
Was his determined destiny !
Amazed in wonder I am lost,
That Donald scathless should have crossed,
That road, and yet despite that deed,
To him the Cross was not decreed !
On one occasion it appears,
A band of savage mutineers,
Were halting in the very town,
Where faint and weary he lay down ;
A noble Tehsildar that day,
Contrived to smuggle him away.
Faithful, amongst the faithful few,
That Tehsildar proved more than true.
He led him by the only path,
He could escape the Pandy's wrath !
Though long with Donald's friendship blessed,
I never should myself have guessed,
That he, with such abilities,

¹ Written before his lamented death.

Had "asinine" proclivities!
Associated with an ass,
Or what we call the donkey class;
It was a strange *assimilation*,
And it requires some explanation!
Well! Stewart in his daring course,
Had quite exhausted his poor horse,
Which further would not budge an inch,
And in this awkward, fatal pinch,
Our Hero, as his heart he steeled,
Perceived a donkey in a field,
Quietly grazing on the grass
As is the custom of the ass!
This quadruped of equine genus,
In this sad strait will not demean us
If we annex it for our use,
(Who cares a scrap for man's abuse!)
The act might seem undignified
Just then, *that* scarcely signified!
Such thoughts *most likely* crossed his mind,
As he proceeded to unbind,
And free that donkey from its fetter,
And nothing could have turned out better!
He bade the owner no adieu,
But rode his nag without ado!
The donkey liked his brand-new master,
And off he trotted fast—and faster!
Like Baalam's ass he had a tongue,
And wagged it too midst old and young!
Asses you'll find in some sage book,
Are not the donkeys that they look!
And Donald's steed was so well-bred
That this is what he *must* have said—
"Although an ass no doubt I am,
My rider is I'm sure a man,

Of some uncommon dignity,
Perhaps an embryo C.-in.-C. !
Soon as his spurs touched up my flank,
I felt he was a man of rank."
This tale may sound apocryphal,
But, friends, there is no doubt at all,
By help of those swift donkey's hoofs,
Of which there are abundant proofs,
Sir Donald did in fact complete,
His most audacious Delhi feat !
Whene'er I hear a donkey bray,
Within my inmost heart I say,
Perhaps that is the self-same ass,
Astride of which did Donald pass,
When he (how worn, I need not tell ye,)
Had forg'd his risky way to Delhi,
When he, grand fellow, nearly starving,
Was then reduced to his last farthing.
O ! champion rider of the ass,
All other rides seem now a farce !
'Tis strange that in that Pandey's strife,
A donkey helped to save his life—
Donald's, I mean ; all jests apart,
That ride displayed a Hero's heart :
And his indomitable pluck,
Insured for him proverbial luck !
Of many deeds I now recall,
That feat of Donald's rivals all ;
That race for life—why was he spared ?
Hair-breadth escapes enough he dared.
When nothing else can shield or save,
Good fortune always aids the brave !

* * * * *

P.S.—Thus far my frivolous pen had tried,
To joke on scenes in Donald's ride,

I never dreamt his work was done,
That his last race was nearly run!
When last we met, he, hale and well,
Seemed destined for a lengthened spell
Of life—I thought, in green old age,
He long would tread this mortal stage,
Yet his remains this very day,
To their last Home were borne away.
Well! he has fought a glorious fight,
To honour him is my delight;
The time, the spot where we last met,
I now with life shall ne'er forget!
Close by the Chelsea entrance gate,
Sir Donald did his guests await;
A festive scene so bright and fair,
In which old comrades loved to share.
It was to all a genuine treat:
And me he seemed to warmly greet,
And now that he has gone—is dead,
I feel I hear each word he said;
Words so pathetically dear,
He whispered lowly in my ear,
As I, an instant, there did stand,
Whilst he compressed my willing hand—
“One of my very oldest friends,”
And here, alas, my story ends—
This was his greeting—sad to tell,
It also proved his last farewell!

REFLECTIONS ON THE DECORATION OF THE VICTORIA CROSS

FORTUNE at times is densely blind,
And circumstances most unkind ;
Thus daring deeds don't catch the eye,
Of those in high authority ;
And some unnoticed have remained,
Others have honours thick attained.
Such men exist, and not a few,
To whom the Cross has long been due,
Whilst all I'm sure have sympathized,
With heroes thus unrecognized ;
Whose deeds have won our admiration,
But have evoked no compensation !
Shame on officials, young or old,
Who leave our Warriors in the cold !
Tho' disappointed some may be,
The green-eyed monster jealousy,
Never defiles his manly breast,
As every soldier can attest.
They all delight, I think, to see,
Their comrade's noble chivalry ;
His glorious and superb devotion,
Covered with honour and promotion !
The splendour of their noble action
Dazzles the world by its attraction !

Till something more and still more thrilling
Obscures the past in art of killing!
Myself, I do not here delude,
With thoughts so vain which would include,
A place in honour's roll of fame,
For my unknown, unworthy name :
"To covet honour," I agree,
Has been my fault, if fault it be,
Throughout my long and stirring life,
In times of peace or scenes of strife,
For this I never ceased to strive.
The most offending man alive !
In youth my Shakespeare I was taught,
And he provides me with this thought,
I never, as explained elsewhere,
Could in my heart of hearts declare,
That I had fairly won the Cross ;
I know its worth, deplore its loss.
With valour's badge, it is quite true,
A great deal more than others do,
I should have swaggered—*that* I feel,
My weakness I will not conceal.
Had I this decoration won,
This yarn I never should have spun,
But said with patronizing air,
To those whose bosoms all were bare,
Of honours—on my honour bright,
With fate adverse you cannot fight ;
Nature to you has been most cross,
You cannot make her change her course.
To me with honours she has always been
(Hypothetically I mean)
So lavish, generous, and kind ;
I would not have her change her mind,
And with my Cross I'm well content !

His views alone I would resent,
Who seemed to have a strong idea,
That these my claims were not quite clear,
And if comparisons were made,
His choice would on himself be laid!
In merry days when I was young,
I must confess with truthful tongue,
I had a quenchless thirst for fame,
All soldiers surely feel the same?
I would have staked my own right arm,
Or suffered any mental harm,
Victoria's famous Cross to win!
In me, would *that* have been a sin?
A nobler sight I can't conceive,
Than warrior with his empty sleeve;
Yes, this I thought in days of yore,
And think it still when near four score;
But now that I am waxing old,
To all rewards am growing cold,
With shadows lengthening fast,
"The future soon to be the past;"
I trust I shall descend the grave
Not less respected, not less brave,
Shall enter my eternal rest,
If I have tried to do my best;
Though void of valour's decoration,
With all old comrades' approbation,
Having, I hope, as soldier keen
Served well my country and my Queen.

KRUGER

IN ANTICIPATION

FIRST PHASE OF THE S. AFRICAN WAR

AFGHAN and Sikh, and Mutiny days,
Are themes to suit a rhymster's lays,
A chord they touch in my old heart,
Because in them I took a part ;
But now 'tis time that I should stop,
And let the Indian curtain drop.
For while I write our hearts are filled,
With doubts and fears—and often thrilled,
With pride—for on South Afric's shores,
Our sons are struggling with the Boers ;
The strife already has begun,
And battles have been lost and won.
Old Kruger in his mad reliance,
On Boer strength, has hurled defiance,
At England, whose Imperial Crown,
He vaunts in dust to trample down !
His rude, untaught, and narrow mind,
Is sordid, mean, and unrefined ;
Without a spark of sympathy,
With Britons' love of liberty,
With no respect for chivalry,
And with no sense of equity.

Unfit he thought us to appear,
Within the realms of his own sphere :
The sly old fox, there is no doubt,
Had long resolved to kick us out !
But if Paul Kruger will but wait,
Lord Roberts will decide his fate ;
For equity 'tween man and man,
And truth and justice only can,
In every Christian land prevail,
And never yet were known to fail !
Uitlanders brought to him his wealth,
Their rights he filched by craft and stealth !
While from the mine's exhaustless store,
The Britons dig the golden ore,
Which adds untold of, boundless pelf,
To Kruger's hoard, for he himself,
Appropriates the Lion's share,
His pious soul thinks this quite fair !
His views he would with texts support,
He has in Scripture been well taught ;
The hypocrite, benevolent.
The burden of the Government,
He fully—sharply understands,
And keeps it strictly in his hands ;
In Kruger's oligarchic school,
This is the universal rule,
That those, a special few, in power,
Who so "improve each shining hour,"
Should each in that exclusive clan,
Become ere long an affluent man !
Uitlanders are debarred this class,
The Briton too, is thought an ass.
No vote, no voice within the States,
Will Kruger grant to those he hates ;
And this injustice he will rue,

For well he knows what is our due !
While Britons labour day by day,
The Boers themselves prefer to play.
Altho' auriferous Boer lands,
Are mainly worked by British hands,
With heavy taxes Boers despoil,
The busy toilers of the soil.
Kruger such burdens hard decries
In case of Boers, for he is wise ;
Taxes on them he does not lay,
And not a farthing do they pay !

TO KRUGER

Prepare thy sceptre to resign,
That which by rights was never thine ;
We Britons have at last refused,
To bow to laws by Boers abused ;
Our kith they are, who freedom crave,
Not one will henceforth be a slave !
Too long have they incurred disgrace,
For serving as a Helot race !
Down-trodden they will be no more,
Will settle their long-standing score !
No longer will they brook a ruler,
Like that rapacious, selfish Kruger ;
Equality shall hold its own,
When that old sinner quits his throne !

SECOND PHASE

The greatest Empire of the world,
Has been by Kruger backward hurled ;
That subtle ruler has prevailed,
And up till now has England failed.

When he predicted "he would stagger,
Humanity," it was not swagger; .
It was no vain or idle boast,
When with his active Farmer host,
He swore he would in every fight
Baffle grand England in her might!
And has he not our Generals foiled,
And their grand reputations spoiled?
And have we not fierce battles lost,
And cannot yet compute the cost?
Is not each ghastly, sad reverse,
Followed by others—worse and worse;
Prophets of ill, exulting say,
We Britishers have had our day,
And must resign our lofty station,
Henceforth become a third-class nation!
We little Englanders shall be,
The scorn of all humanity!
All foreigners a joy will feel,
To see us crushed 'neath Kruger's heel.
Our countrymen he little knows,
Who think that half-a-dozen blows,
Delivered with a cunning skill,
Would in the Britons' hearts instil,
A scare, that they (no doubt surprised)
Would be completely paralyzed;
But their invasion we shall stem,
And shortly shall astonish them!
The Boers with Kruger at the helm,
We shall as victors overwhelm;
And Kruger will too late repent,
That he did not at once assent,
To equity 'tween man and man.
A claim so righteous no one can,
Dispute, save him whom justice spurned,

And has ere this a lesson learned ;
For equal rights, and nothing more,
We asked for Britons and the Boer.
Surely such rights if freely given,
Are sealed on earth and blessed in Heaven :
The Lion roused, is hard to tame ;
It is a very dangerous game,
To play, and one that none should try on,
The King of beasts—the British Lion—
Ere this “His Honour ” will have found,
For him this maxim's far too sound.
To violate a flag of truce,
No white man ever finds excuse ;
The British Lion won't descend,
To dirty tricks, which all offend :
Such treachery might the Zulu suit,
Or any other savage brute.
Those wiles of course we shall not brook,
We may select from Kruger's book,
A leaf, where foxy schemes impart,
A cunning to the Lion's heart !
Our soldiers shall not face that hell,
Of Kopjies charged with shot and shell,
We shall not risk that blast again.
If Boers won't meet us in the plain,
We shall just leave them in their lair,
And our attack direct elsewhere ;
However long the fight may last,
The British Bull-dog will hold fast,
And ne'er will he relax his grip,
Until old Kruger we shall strip,
Of every shred of power to reign,
Within South Africa's domain !
Whilst Kruger's rule I deprecate,
And all his ways abominate,

There's one redeeming feature bright,
Which did him honour in his might ;
When he in mercy spared the Chief,
Who came to such untoward grief,
Whose life the forfeit must have paid,
And nothing could his fate have stayed,
But Kruger interposed to save,
Mad Jameson from a felon's grave !
That act magnanimous, I trust,
Will bear its fruit—I'm sure it must,
When times are changed and lots reversed,
When Kruger's armies are dispersed,
And he himself in jeopardy,
Dependent on our clemency ;
Recalling Jameson's reprieve,
May Kruger pardon full receive !

THIRD AND LAST PHASE

Packed off, perhaps, to his own farm,
As farmer he could do no harm ;
Disarmed, as he no doubt would be,
Restricted in his liberty.
And from his Bible he would learn,
(To which he does so often turn)
The lesson he has overlooked,
Through which his goose has thus been cooked ;
Injustice, greed, duplicity,
Don't pay in this our Century ;
And Boerish customs won't go down,
With those brought up 'neath England's Crown.
We must for him allowance make,
When victors we his measure take :
A peasant born, illiterate,
He yet undaunted met his fate,

And if he held the British cheap,
And fully thought that he would sweep,
The Duffers from his fatherland ;
When he first waved the Kruger hand,
He can't forget on us he sat,
And licked us into one cocked hat ;
Of pluck we seemed to him exempt,
And so he held us in contempt !
Kruger had surely grounds to think,
As soldiers we were prone to shrink.
Like Paul (the Saint) I long have borne
In my own flesh a sharpish thorn,
Which deeply in my side had stuck,
Yes, ever since our flag was struck,
And all whom Boers failed to kill
Decamped adown Majuba's Hill !
But panics every now and then
Occur amongst the bravest men ;
The self-same soldiers we have seen,
Like heroes serving their loved Queen !
This truth the Boers will now see fit,
To frankly, though our foes, admit !
Paul Kruger found Paul Methuen,
Just one of those poor Englishmen,
Who e'en a stubborn Boer appals
And like sledge-hammer on him falls !
'Tis said adversity is sweet
And useful—and—for most men—meet.
'Twas William Shakespeare who thought so,
But Paul, that poet did not know !
The old man in his leisure hours,
Deprived of Presidential powers,
Absorbed in his bucolic life,
Free from all care and ceaseless strife,
Altho' against him ran the tide,

With Mrs. Kruger by his side,
And with his horses, sheep, and cows,
And with his children and bow-wows,
And with his hunting and his gun,
He now enjoys domestic fun !
In his "Sweet Home" a resident,
Happier than as President !
Much easier lies, he finds, his head,
Since he as captive home was led :
Within the sphere of calmer days,
Quite changed he has his works and ways,
And owns he did the British wrong,
And never dreamt they were so strong !
Convinced 'tis ne'er too late to mend,
He claims the Briton as his friend,
And says, in my prosperity,
I *did* snub them, they don't snub me,
And I prefer to be Paul Kruger,
A Farmer than a Boer ruler !

MISCELLANEOUS

THE STORY OF THE SUDDEN MEETING BETWEEN AN OLD SOLDIER AND AN OLD COMRADE (HIS PRESERVER) AFTER FORTY-ONE YEARS' SEPARATION

WHEN I awoke this early morn,
Long ere the glorious sun was born,
My thoughts sped back, I know not why,
To scenes in that dread Mutiny!
To those dark days of gloom and death,
When loyal hearts drew anxious breath:
Till after months of toil and woe,
The avenging columns crushed the foe.
I thought of all we underwent,
In those grim times—of long hours spent,
In weary marching, in the chase,
Of rebels whom we longed to face;
I thought of danger safely past,
Of many a conflict won at last,
Of many a comrade bold and true,
To whom the "Cross" was justly due!
Of one to whose unerring spear,
I owe the fact that I am here!
Yes, surely I was bound to go,
To my last home long years ago,

Had "Bashi" not with rapid glance,
My peril seen, and with his lance,
Timely transfixed that ruthless Pandy,
Who thought he had me safe and handy!
On parapet he stood at bay,
And him I had no chance to slay:
He was above, and I below,
With sword I could not reach my foe.
Against a Pandy on a wall,
A Horseman's sword's no use at all!
My pistol from an unknown cause,
Refused to act—a fearful pause,
Ensued—and helpless my condition;
My foe, secure in his position,
Taking a cool, deliberate aim,
He could not fail to kill or maim.
Within six yards he stood from me,
A dangerous propinquity!
For Pandy with his matchlock ready,
And feeling safe was *very steady*;
Another moment and no doubt,
My brains would then have been blown out;
But "Bashi," bravest of the brave,
Rushed to the front—his pal to save;
And with a well-directed thrust,
Rolled Pandy over in the dust!
As Pandy fell, "You should," he said,
"Have hurled your pistol at his head,
If just this lesson him to teach;
He was not quite beyond your reach."
A simple dodge like that, I own,
The rankest duffer should have known,
A pistol as a missile used,
Would Pandy's aim have much confused.
I cannot wonder "Bashi" thought,

I failed to do the thing I ought ;
Just then he must have held me cheap,
For "Bashis" do not often steep,
Their lips in language somewhat coarse,
Unless excited—then of course,
He might a hasty word let fly,
In *Satan's* name ; and ask me why,
When my false pistol made that mull,
I dashed it not at Pandý's skull !¹
Well ! what I really did that day,
I am not quite prepared to say,
But I was in a pretty mess,
Of that I freely here confess ;
I might have felt inclined to run,
When close in front of Pandý's gun ;
One's ardour must I think abate,
Who finds he can't retaliate.
To stand stock-still and thus be shot,
Without a chance to make it hot
For foeman perched upon a wall,
Was awkward—some it might appal ;
But fools rush in, as I have read,
Where angels even dare not tread !
'Tis true, but I, unlike that fool,
Though taught in an angelic school,
On *horse*-back could not well "rush in,"
And thus was spared his "foolish" sin !
Well ! if again I come to grief,
And urgently require relief,
I shall whate'er may be my fix,
On "Bashi's" spear, the one that sticks,
My foes, implicitly rely,
And all the Pandý world defy !

¹ He asked me why the Devil I did not hurl the pistol at Pandý's head.

Before I close this stirring tale,
I should I think in duty fail,
If frankly I did not define,
That this is "Bashi's" yarn, not mine,
I mean *that part when not polite*,
He blew me up, that in my fight,
My pistol, swift as boomerang,
At Pandý's pate I failed to bang;
His words profane I can't recall,
But firmly I believe it all,
For "Bashi" first the story told,
And is he not as true as gold?
On him so vivid strikes the scene,
As if but lately it had been;
Posted he is in each detail,
His memory never seems to fail.
Whilst on his noble self I dwell
I seem to have the more to tell;
For fascinated and engrossed,
I cannot but of "Bashi" boast!
I cannot from my "Bashi" sever,
And thus go on I must for ever!
By aiding me, in nick of time,
He may have screened me from a crime,
Which soldiers never do forget,
At least they've never done so yet!
If I had hooked it, on reflection,
And had, perchance, escaped detection,
Awful it might have been for me,
Who won a "Brevet" and C.B.!
If I, within my inmost heart,
Was prompted then to make a start,
To—wards the rear, just out of fire,
If that was my concealed desire.
To that impeachment I say "no"

(Perhaps, *en passant*, I may say,
The thought first crossed my mind *to-day*!)
But *had* I fled, though long ago,
My tail I'm sure (my shame to crown)
Had henceforth hung ignobly down ;
To bolt I knew was disallowed,
However much I might be cowed ;
Annoyed, I fancy that I swore,
I'd like to deluge him in gore,
And tear the scoundrel limb from limb,
If I could only get at him !

Brutal this sounds to ears polite,
But tame to those in deadly fight,
With *brutes*, who in their shameless lives,
Had slain our daughters and our wives !
"Bashi" just then arrived so kind,
Speared him in front or else behind,
I can't say which—pray take your choice,
In either case I did rejoice :
These are the views I entertain,
Which seem to me both clear and plain,
As I recline in my arm-chair,
Conning what I should do or dare,
Were I engaged again in war,
Which from my heart I should abhor,
With years exceeding seventy-six¹
Veterans shirk both kicks and sticks.
A horseman armed without a spear
Is simply useless—that's quite clear,
When foes are "cabined, cribbed, confined,"
All access closed, they do not mind.
In spots impregnable they say,
A Pandy never runs away !
At times he counts without his host,

¹ Now exceeding seventy-seven.

A rift he sees not in his post :
Holding his own until too late,
A spear's sharp point decides his fate ;
And when to die he sees he must,
He's filled with undisguised disgust !
Though hopeless an assault might seem,
Altho' with dangers it might teem,
"Bashi" the more resolved would be
To scorn impregnability !
"Impossible," a word so vexed,
Did not exist in "Bashi's" text !
By nature "Bashi" was not bloody,
His acts and deeds I've made my study ;
This might to those who know him not,
Savour of that which we call rot !
He put, the day he rescued me,
Eleven Pandies up a tree :
He did in their vile bodies plunge,
His deadly lance at "Meeangunge,"
Most richly they deserved their fate,
Who were impaled on that same date.
"Bashi" had heard the widows' cries,
Their misery seen with his own eyes :
Those who denounce blood-thirsty men,
Should ponder on these things, and then,
The softest, mildest will not wonder,
If "Bashi" called, with voice of thunder,
For vengeance on the cursed head,
Of demons, black, alive or dead,
Who seemed to come all "hot from hell"
With Ate's diabolic yell !
What if he smiled, as grim he saw,
Pandies "quarter'd by the hand of war."
At sickening thought of their fell deeds,
The heart again with anguish bleeds,

As on those scenes sad memory falls,
For vengeance deep again it calls!
In time of peace as mild as milk,
In war—of quite another ilk!
To lay life down for some dear friend,
Can any virtue *that* transcend?
Not quite the same thing “Bashi” did,
But still this world he cleared and rid,
Of him who sought to murder me,
The need of which I did not see!
That act, I thought, on “Bashi’s” part,
Did credit to his head and heart!
The V.C. Cross does not adorn,
His manly bosom—but ’tis worn,
I know, though brave they be, by none
Who had more brilliant service done!
For valour recommended twice,
The Chief, he thought, showed signs of vice
When he (as many in the corps
Had won the Cross) would give no more!
“Bashi” forgot ’twas only fair
That other corps should have their share!
The “Bashi” claim was just and true,
I dearly should have liked one too;
Although I keenly feel the loss,
I own I never earned the Cross,
In this there is no sort of fudge,
My conscience speaks, unerring judge
“Bashi” deserved a better fate,
He cut in nobly, but too late,
O! who does not in heart and soul,
With ill-requited men condole!
My habit thus to moralize,
I feel the reader’s temper tries;
The thread I lose of my long story

And this detracts from "Bashi's" glory.
Hark back I must—him heartily,
I thanked for all he'd done for me.
But he and I had work to do,
And so we promptly bid adieu ;
My life is saved—he disappears,
The curtain falls—for forty years.

THE MEETING OF TWO OLD COMRADES AFTER
FORTY-ONE YEARS' SEPARATION

STRANGER than fiction facts occur,
To this my friends will not demur,
How I my saviour "Bashi" met,
I'm sure I never shall forget :
At such a time, and place, and mode,
It was a curious episode.
Some readers might decline to bear,
The burden of a yarn so rare ;
If that be so, I can't complain,
I do not overlook the strain,
To swallow if you find it hard,
Then pray at once the tale discard ;
For worlds I would not make you ill,
To please, amuse you, is my will.
Shoulder to shoulder one fine day,
Two strangers watched a grand display,
By cyclists of the Yankee race,
Who twisted, turned, and went the pace :
Their skill excited my surprise,
My friend (unknown) they "fetched" likewise.
We then commenced a friendly chat,
About past days, and this, and that,
And soon our talk the fact revealed,

We had been comrades in the field !
At length the astounding thought came o'er me,
"Bashi" it was who stood before me ;
I thought that he long since had gone,
From this world to a better one !
But here he turned up, like a saint,
As true as steel and fresh as paint ;
Yes ! two old buffers how we paired !
At one another how we stared !
I was in youth drawn very fine,
And "Bashi" showed the same slim line ;
To be stomachic now inclined,
If strictly "profiles" be defined !
He rather bald, I very white,
Some cranks in body, mind all right ;
I cannot vouch for his condition,
But this I think, hostile collision,
With him would prove an awkward test,
Most foes would come off second best !
I hold my own still pretty well,
With taste and teeth, and sense and smell,
Not yet the slippered pantaloon,
But that I must be very soon !

THE END—FAREWELL TO "BASHI"

But now 'tis midnight—and the time
To cease this never-ending rhyme :
But whilst I write these feeble lines,
My heart is full—my will inclines,
To fall at "Bashi's" feet and bless,
The ground on which his footsteps press.
If this extravagant may sound,
I feel a gratitude profound,
To him, who in a deadly strife
From instant death preserved my life !

In Heaven's name what is there trashy,
If I apotheosize "Bashi" ?
I feel that nothing I can say,
Can ever what I owe repay :
One parting word I have to tell
And then my story's done—farewell !
"Bashi," until my days shall end,
I hail you, saviour—and my friend.

HOW REPUTATIONS ARE WON

How some men reputations gain,
Unknown to them I will explain ;
I happened once to overhear,
The fag-end of a story clear,
Told by a comrade and old friend,
Who seemed some flatt'ring words to spend,
On one whom he proclaimed a hero,
Whilst others sank right down to zero !
His hero's deed he thus described,
(I chance to know he was not bribed) :
One day by that grand leader, "Slade,"¹
A charge magnificent was made ;
His foes, fanatical and fierce,
Like madmen strove our line to pierce.
So eagerly his Troop he led,
That he had pushed too far ahead,
And ere his men had reached the fray,
Unhorsed their helpless leader lay.
But he escaped with life : well-nigh,
Was slashed in two his huge thick thigh :
No stroke of sabre could detach,
A limb like his, with frame to match !

¹ Then Captain Slade, 7th Hussars.

His sub, poor "Banks," at awful cost,
Of leg and arm, for both he lost,
That day, by miracle was spared !
For life he would not then have cared,
Had he poor gallant fellow known,
His spirit would so soon be flown,
His mangled form would soon be dead.
Within a month his narrow bed,
Held all then left of that fine lad :
A soldier's story—but how sad !
In his own yacht he hoped to pass,
Some happy years—alas ! alas !
When all his wounds were nearly healed,
His fate poor noble boy was sealed ;
For just when he could crawl again,
He was by cruel fever slain !
The Queen in deepest sympathy,
Sent to the parents her V.C.
As Slade and Banks lay sorely smitten,
Account of which I've fully written,
A comrade to the rescue came,
And that brave comrade bore my name !
Havelock, at least, held that conviction,
Unconscious of his baseless fiction,
Was telling comrades standing near,
(With him I served for one whole year) ;
I was the hero of his tale,
To be amazed I could not fail !
Of course I did not doubt his word,
Tho' of his facts I ne'er had heard !
The yarn from me had long been screened,
And glad I was I intervened,
And had the chance to tell the truth,
What happened in my happy youth !
Great Heaven I thanked for my intrusion,

Corrected sharp his fond delusion,
Transferred to "Peter" all the glory,
As will appear in this same story!
By Wilkin—son, without the "son,"
That grand heroic deed was done,
'Twas Peter and not Osborn true,
To whom that credit all was due!
Yes! me no doubt it might have been,
But I, eye-witness of the scene,
Did not, like Peter sword in hand
(No, I did nothing half so grand)
To th' rescue rush. I took my stand
Close by, and in the seething lot
Some barrels of my pistol shot;
When Havelock thus converted me,
Into a first-class brave V.C.,
(At least, he thought I ought to be),
The story was a downright lie!
But he was innocent as I!
Convinced he was that it was true,
"I'm sure," he said, "that it was you!"
This pinnacle long I must have held,
But down I climbed—the fib dispelled;
This yarn though tending to my loss
Will show how near I won the Cross!
To Peter Wilkin be the praise,
He was the Hero of those days;
'Tis only right and very meet
I should recount his gallant feat:
Disclaim the honours I had worn,
So long from dauntless Peter torn,
And wished with all sincerity,
That I had really then been he;
James Haggard¹ also took a part,

¹ Colonel of 7th Hussars.

Which showed he had a noble heart,
And with the "kudos" should have shared,
For both the self-same dangers dared !

RECOLLECTIONS OF KURUM AND ANNANDALE
SCENES

MY memory now is wont to stray,
To well-known spots far—far away ;
My thoughts revert to "Kurum's" Vale,
And then to Simla's "Annandale."
Both types of nature's fairest scene !
Beneath the feet a velvet green,
Grand trees whose towering branches spread,
A sheltering canopy overhead,
And streams as clear as crystal flowed,
Mountains with rhododendrons glowed,
And sparkled with a rainbow hue.
It was indeed a splendid view :
The hills, which high and higher rose,
Were crowned with everlasting snows,
Ravishing spot, and wondrous fair,
What could on earth with it compare ?
When Milton hailed our "Parent good,"
On Simla's hills he must have stood !
On nature's works he loved to gaze,
Hence his immortal "Song of praise,"
Such scéniic grandeur filled his mind,
Before, poor fellow, he went blind !
This is at least what I suppose,
Though History's page does not disclose,
The fact, and under some delusion,
I may have drawn a wrong conclusion !

O ! Annandale ! O ! Paradise !
Thou handy-work of " Him " all-wise,
Thy glories surely were designed,
To give a glimpse to all mankind,
Of boundless bliss, the God of love,
Has stored for us in realms above :
The pleasures radiant in thy sphere,
E'en now in varied forms appear !
For fast young men, who go the pace,
There is a course on which they race ;
Albeit the sharp and sudden curves,
Are trying to the jockey's nerves,
For horse and rider sometimes go,
Over the " khud " to depth below !
Those revelries at Annandale,
With aching heart I now bewail ;
Because I feel 'tis all in vain,
To wish such days could come again !
We picnicked to our hearts' content,
On fun and frolic all were bent,
The flag of mirth was then unfurled,
And to it flocked the Simla world :
The young and old, the grave and gay,
All out for their glad holiday !
In mazy dance some skimmed the sward,
And others in as sweet accord,
Wandered amongst the trees and flowers,
And quite forgot the fleeting hours ;
Others indulged in tender cooings,
Which ended oft in real wooings !
While music's soft, entrancing sound
Re-echoed through the hills around.
Champagne unlimited did lend,
A spirit to the feast, the end,
Found all most loth to go away,

Each longing for another day!
Such are the outings I recall,
When I was lord of "Squire's Hall."
Gymkhana feats wound up the sports,
In which the friendly rivals fought:
Football, cricket, and steeplechase,
A spice of danger all embrace.
Confronting perils, though in sport,
Brings out the mettle and right sort!
Excelling in each manly game,
Our lads are on the road to fame:
For mimic warfare has a ring
Which savours of the real thing!
In Eton's playing fields, 'tis said,
Old England's heroes all were bred;
'Twas there they deeply laid the roots,
Destined to yield such glorious fruits!
'Twas there that Waterloo was won,
Where we, as "Bony" thought, were done,
And bound by rules of war to run!
'Twas there our gallant Eton lads
Defied the Frenchman and his fads;
Our Boys, though beaten as alleged,
To die but not give in were pledged!
So firm as rock refused to yield,
And drove the rascals from the field;
They scattered o'er the blood-stained plain,
Never to face our Troops again!
Ah! how those bearded veterans fled,
Before our beardless lads—and led,
So grandly by those Eton boys,
Whom "Bony" swore were only toys,
Which he could play with at his pleasure,
So ill had he conceived their measure!
Wellington surely ought to know,

It must be true, as he says so !
"Etona floreat," I cry,
An old, old Eton boy am I !

STORIES

REFERRING TO THE MUTINY, THE DEATH OF THE
EAST INDIA COMPANY, THE KING OF SIAM,
AND THE HIGHLANDER

WHEN peace in India was restored,
And rebels met their due reward,
The Indian "Company" hauled down,
Its colours to the regal Crown !
The civic rule had served its day,
And so for ever passed away !
The sceptre then o'er Eastern lands,
Was wielded by Imperial hands !
To mark the epoch in that strife,
When for a time each Christian's life,
Was held together by a thread,
When hope itself had almost fled ;
To mark, I say, the era, when
The stubborn pluck of Englishmen,
Backed up by self-created might,
Brought out of darkness, brilliant light !
To herald in that great event,
The transfer of the Government,
The Viceroy held a grand Durbar,
When Chiefs assembled from afar,
To honour on that famed occasion,
Our Queen Victoria's proclamation :
Which called on all beneath her sway,
As India's Empress to obey !

Amongst a royal retinue
I figured with a favoured few,
As escort to the Siam King,
A sharp inquiring little thing,
Who then had joined the Delhi camp,
With others of a princely stamp !
As past a Highlander we strolled,
The King inquired if he was cold ?
The kilted warrior smart replied,
Breeches to me have been denied,
From early boyhood until now,
To this he was prepared to vow ;
He then, as bound, presented arms,
Which ranks with Siamese "Salaams" !
The King conceived it hard, no doubt,
To dress our soldiers, brave and stout,
In kilts which were, he thought, indecent ;
In times refined like these, so recent !
At least, this is what I then inferred,
Of course it may be all absurd.
The Monarch was not really shocked,
Because the Highlanders were "frocked,"
It proved, at least, the British Nation,
Was wanting much in cultivation !
Of such a barbarous state ashamed,
He hoped we soon should be reclaimed !
When memory nears its eighth decade,
It cannot but begin to fade ;
How far my playful meditations,
Are not the fanciful creations,
Of mind decayed, I cannot tell,
But this I do remember well :
His Highness did distinctly stare,
At petticoats which Scotchmen wear ;
Amazed he was at legs so bare !

Their stalwart forms he did admire,
But wondered at their strange attire;
If I his views correctly scan,
He thought the dress unsexed the man!
But he, polite and courteous King,
Did give no tongue to such a thing;
He thought a lot—of that I'm sure,
And thoughts of Siamese are pure,
And worth recording, for 'tis rare,
To see such monarch anywhere!
The scene's before my one good eye
As now I write—how time does fly!
Some thirty years or more have past,
Since that young Sovereign's hand I grasped:
Perhaps his Highness, king so wee,
Did not confer this grace on me:
Such honour was beyond my due,
But pity 'tis, if 'tis not true!
He fraternized, and was so keen,
To pay due homage to our Queen;
Her subjects' customs and their ways,
Evoked, except their kilts, his praise!
That sentinel so scanty clad,
Doubtless recalls that nice young lad,
Who was so much concerned to see,
The Scotch in partial nudity!
That Cavalry would better fight,
If trousers were not quite so tight:
Myself a horseman, I admit,
Our garments did too closely fit!
If men, for instance, were obese,
In pantaloons without a crease,
To mount a charger, rather tall,
If rider be in stature small,
Involves a ticklish operation

(This I attest, from observation)
So often ending in disaster,
Which is not healed by sticking-plaster!
And then again, in days of yore,
Those stiff horse-collars that we wore,
Around our throttled necks—those stocks,
More cruel than those Highland frocks!
But they caught not the kingly eye,
To kilts alone he said : O ! fie !
For soldiers without pants at all,
That did surprise, if not appal,
That modest King, who ne'er had seen,
Such sights where he had ever been !
In his kind heart it did create,
A pity for the Scotchmen's fate !
However, they will always be
Admirers of his Majesty !
Compassion for their quaint undress,
Highlanders will for ever bless !
Despite that Monarch's condemnation,
I doubt if any alteration,
(And notwithstanding all I've said)
Will in their uniform be made ;
For think of all the blood they've spilt,
In that renowned, most glorious kilt !
How they have stood as staunch as rocks,
Apparelled in their Highland frocks !
When thus equipped, what deeds have done,
What reputations have they won !
And how they scared the Siamese,
And licked the Boers and Soudanese !
Provided *I* am not required,
To don the dress so much admired,
Cheerfully I would give my vote
To keep intact the petticoat !

Stand up I could not—nor sit down—
In comfort in that short-cut gown !
At least from public gaze, I think,
I rather should incline to shrink ;
Exposure, stark, in any form,
Would raise amongst my friends a storm,
For 'tis well known that for my sins
That I possess "Light Cavalry" pins !
Thus Siam's King and I agree,
We are in perfect sympathy !

Since writing the above it has been hinted to me that I am referring to the Siamese Ambassador and not the King. Well, my story is told ; my readers must make their choice.

REFERRING TO SOME MILD PERSONAL ADVENTURES

LIKE most old soldiers in my day,
I had at times my part to play :
In which, it is my firm belief,
I might have come to mortal grief,
Had not the fates kept clear the coast,
Through which I passed (this is no boast) ;
For, lying in an open plain,
I found some Sepoys, lately slain ;
Might not my lot like theirs have been,
Had I come earlier on the scene ?
For I just 'then was quite alone,
No friend to hear my parting groan !
This happened in the Kurum Vale,
When on my way to "ALI KHAIL"
En route to join, with wild delight,
The Hero of the "PEIWUR" fight !

Good fortune, in another ride,
(One hundred miles,) ne'er left my side,
And here I was alone again,
This time 'twas in the SIKH Campaign;
Had lurking Sikhs but pounced on me,
Would they have let me off scot free?
My horse exhausted fell down dead,
Soon as it reached its stable bed!
I can't, as no one cut me up,
Tell tales on which my friends might sup!
Challenged by none, I could not shine,
In this my ride of '49—(1849).
Lord Gough made me rejoin my Corps,
Because his angry Lordship swore,
I joined his force without his leave,
And he would grant me no reprieve!
Of such excuse he would not hear,
That I was then a Volunteer;
My Corps, he said, might any day,
Be wanted for some local fray,
And so he sent me sharp away.
And thus, I had—alack, alack—
To hook it unprotected back;
For mercy I in vain appealed,
My orders were to quit the field.
However, I was not quite foiled,
My little game by no means spoiled,
In one stiff fight I took a part,
And gained the object of my heart!
I won the medal—wear it now,
Despite my snub—despite the row,
Despite my insubordination,
I was allowed that decoration!
And whilst I write, another ride,
Which, in my idiotic pride,

I ventured on, occurs to me—
When I again escaped scot free.
Alone, disguised, I once explored,
Against my Commandant's accord,
The Momund Hills—which up till then,
Had not been crossed by Englishmen :
My Colonel charged me to confine,
My wanderings to the frontier line.
My wild, erratic tastes he knew,
So warned me what I must *not* do ;
This mandate having laid on me,
The rest, he said, remains with thee !
If to the Devil you should go,
Remember that I told you so,
That you would have to pay the price,
If you hold cheap my sound advice !
This prophecy did *not* come true,
To me no evil did accrue !
My rashness ill-deserved success,
In my old age I do confess,
My orders plain I disobeyed,
But haply I was not waylaid—
Though far I forged beyond the bounds,
Marked out for my patrolling rounds.
As my intrusion was found out,
The Momunds thought there was no doubt,
That I some day should come again,
Kept careful watch o'er hill and plain,
To nobble me, so I was told :
But those blood-thirsty men were sold,
My visit I did not repeat ;
To them it would have been a treat,
In "Boosah" stack to bind me tight,
And then to set the straw alight ;
A bonfire thus to make of me,

Involved too warm a penalty!
And so no further explorations,
I made amongst those Momund nations!
That ride! I still remember well,
And as on it I sometimes dwell,
I wonder that a man could be,
So steeped in reckless vanity,
To risk one's life for mere *éclat*,
For comrades' bravo, or hurrah!
I thought it, as a Cornet—*dash*,
But now ridiculously rash.
Some luck, perhaps, I might have won,
In Pandy days, had they not run,
So fast—had they confronting me,
Displayed some more audacity!
And thus one sometimes lost a chance,
Of using either sword or lance.
But here again I must disclaim,
Pretensions to the roll of fame,
If all my acts were rolled in one,
Nothing that I have ever done,
Could for a moment dare compete,
With many a dashing, noble feat,
Which I have read with admiration—
Of friends, the Pride of England's Nation.

REFERRING TO THE TOWER OF LONDON

TO MISS ——— AND HER YOUNG FRIENDS, TO WHOM
I HAD SENT A PASS FOR THE TOWER OF LONDON

MY dear Miss ———, herewith your "Pass,"
So now with young 'uns (lad or lass),

Thus armed, no hindrance will beset,
Your search, and you will freely get,
Access to dungeons and to halls,
With all their antique armoured walls!
You'll see, with awe, the very spot,
Where lovely Mary Queen of Scot,
Laid down her head upon the block.
It was, indeed, a ghastly shock :
To all who witnessed that grim scene,
Ensanguined sawdust, and the "Green"
All smeared with gore ; Queen Bessie, O !
Pray where do you expect to go ?
For queens who cousins do behead,
Must catch it hot when they are dead ;
For pardon "Bess" will axe in vain,
For with an axe her "coz" was slain.
You'll see that Headsman's dull-edged axe ;¹
Which tender necks no longer hacks.
On second thoughts, at Fotheringay,
Poor Mary died historians say :
Mistakes like that disgrace my rhymes ;
Pardon I ask a thousand times.
Two Princes in the Tower were done
To death : it sickened every one ;
'Twas hard those noble boys to smother,
When they so fondly hugged each other.
The "Torture Chamber" next is shown,
One seems to hear the victims groan :
Thumb-screws, and pincers, burning brand,
At sight of which aghast you stand :
Fearful to live in days like those,
When friends cut off your ears and nose :
Pull out the nails of fingers, toes.
In "Press-room," heavy weight compressed

¹ An axe is shown in the Tower.

A human being's heaving chest,
Till flat as pancakes, crushed they lay,
Those forms that once were living clay.
Guy Fawkes they stretched upon the rack,
Each limb disjointed went—crack, crack ;
This delicate work required a knack.
Such skill tormentors did attain,
That whilst inflicting awful pain,
They would not torture quite to death,
But left the wretch, with strength and breath,
To drag his mangled form away,
To be wrenched again the first spare day!
“Ann Askew” for her conscience sake
Was racked, then burnt at Smithfield stake!
And as the warder goes his round,
He'll tell you where the “Duke” was drowned.¹
A cruel “butt” they made of him
(The slayers quite enjoyed the whim),
And “Clarence” was his name, I think ;
He never was disposed to drink,
And yet they soured him in a “butt”
(The lid of which they closely shut)
Of most delicious Malmsey wine,
To sips of which one might incline !
Claret a Clarence might prefer,
Only so far he did demur !
He “whined” at his unhappy fate,
His swipy protest came too late :
He drank too much—yet free from blame,
Drunkards sometimes have done the same ;
Condemned to drain his Malmsey cup,
He gulped, and gulped, then gave it up !
But in the Tower did this take place ?
Pray do your best the truth to trace.

¹ Duke of Clarence.

But having blundered once, I must,
Confess that I myself distrust :
Henry the Eighth, that Bluebeard King,
Thought bridal vows, an irksome thing,
Should not be binding quite for ever ;
Such ties he now and then would sever !
And bent on fresh connubial scenes,
Cut off the heads of both his Queens !
Anne Boleyn thus, and Catherine Howard,
Were murdered by that sensual coward.
As Catherine was his fifth dear wife,
He might, I think, have spared her life ;
But anxious now Kate Parr to wed,
Decapitate her¹ I must, he said ;
He was, poor man, a trifle sad,
No other course just then he had !
Solace he found in one sweet thought—
Her sorrows soon would come to naught.
One short, sharp stroke, and she is free,
Better without his Majesty !
With all my soul those views I hate,
And pity the two poor spouses' fate,
For both were far "his better half,"
Yet I must urge ('tis wrong to chaff)
He longed to marry once again.
That wish must then have been in vain
Unless his Queen should misbehave,
But she was neither fool nor knave,
Was not the least inclined to sin !
In this dilemma he was in,
If him his wife did not betray,
He couldn't, alive, put *her* away ;
To avoid a breach in moral laws
(I need not specify the clause),

¹ Catherine Howard.

He thought 'twould be a lesser evil,
 In eyes of men and of the devil,
 To waft his own superfluous Queen
 To higher realms—the brute, how mean!
 “The haunted gallery,” warders say,
 Resounds with Catherine’s screams all day!
 Raleigh imprisoned for twelve long years,
 Cheery when all were bathed in tears!
 When near the block the axe he felt,
 And said, as on his knees he knelt:
 “This medicine, friends, is sharp indeed,
 A physician ’tis for all we need.”
 “The Traitor’s Gate,” portals of gloom,
 Their jaws wide oped to many a tomb;
 What deeds of blood it does revive,
 How few went through returned alive!
 To tell some tales I might be asked,
 Of Headsman grim, and closely masked:
 To make a good unerring shot,
 Was Headsman’s special “aim” and lot;
 For bungling at the last dread hour,
 Was thought bad form within the Tower!
 By nerves of steel, and hearts of stone,
 All executioners were known,
 But one more tender than his peers,
 Almost gave way to sobs and tears,
 And Lady¹ begged—to her surprise—
 To turn aside her lovely eyes!
 He could not stand the brilliant sight,
 Her beauty overcame him quite.
 Anne Boleyn thus, that cruel day,
 Fearlessly, calmly passed away!
 “St. Peter’s Chapel” will arrest
 The wanderer’s steps, and will attest,

¹ Anne Bo'leyn

The vanity of all earthly things,
To which poor mortal fondly clings.
For here, beneath this peaceful sod,
Are men who feared or spurned their God,
Who fought for fame, for wealth and power,
Lie buried in that Chapel Tower.
Warriors here, long ages dead,
Are mouldering in each narrow bed ;
The bleeding relics of each race,
Were borne to this last resting-place.
The Queens, the Dukes, the Peers, Peeresses,
With or without their heads and dresses !
No mourners had the victims save,
Jailors who laid them in the grave !
St. Peter's Chapel—ah ! there's not,
In all the earth a sadder spot ;
“God's acre,” there, we know contains,
All that could die, all that remains,
Of that unnumbered, slaughtered band,
The best and noblest of our land.
These horrors past, away you go,
To feast on that “Regalia” show—
Surpassing, brilliant, dazzling, bright,
Symbols of England's wealth and might !
The Koh-i-nor you'll see within,
More costly e'en than my pearl pin !
But warn your children to beware,
And not to covet jewels rare !
To touch or prig the smallest gem,
Will make it very warm for them !
Beef-eaters stout, with halberts long,
With stockings red, and arms so strong,
Pilferers stick right through and through,
Without compunction or ado !
Should children ask the Tower's age,

Refer them straight to History's page;
Or better still they'd realize,
The fact, if you, so 'cute and wise,
Tell them 'twas built, as you'll be sworn,
Long, long before when you were born!
From this they'd form a shrewd idea,
It must be ancient, that's quite clear!
Henceforth they'll show by words and acts,
They've learned some great historic facts.
My Tower tales I now have told,
And awful were those days of old.
Men called them brave and glorious,
Despite the facts notorious,
That blood like water drenched the land,
And high-born maids and heroes grand,
Whose deeds had won a world-wide fame,
Were hurried to the axe and flame!
Thank Heaven, those shameful scenes are past,
In happier lines our lot is cast.

REFERRING TO THE DEATH, WITHIN A FEW
DAYS OF EACH OTHER, OF THE THREE
TOWER OFFICIALS

GENL. SIR DANIEL LYSONS, *Constable of the Tower of London*.
GENL. SIR FREDERICK MIDDLETON, *The Keeper of the Jewels*.
SENIOR WARDER PENROLL, *The Chief Warder of the Tower*.

WHILST pondering on those bye-gone days,
With all their wretched works and ways,
My thoughts just now in sadness dwell,
On present times—it will be well
If we this solemn lesson learn,
That three fine Soldiers in their turn,

Within a week we had to mourn,
Gone to their last and earthly bourne.
The Constable of London's Tower,
The type of valour, and the flower,
Of chivalry—the well-known "Dan"
Lysons, revered the grand old man;
One of the first on Crimea's shore,
The last to leave when all was o'er;
When badly wounded he might then,
Have homeward gone with his maimed men.
But no, he said he would remain,
And served throughout the whole Campaign;
In sticking staunchly to his post,
He had indeed a right to boast.
I don't reflect on any one,
But when was duty nobler done?
I hoped before he left the scene,
Field-Marshal he had surely been.
And had our Queen conferred with me,
At her resplendent Jubilee,
With deep respect I should have said,
As low I bowed my humble head,
Your "Baton" to Sir Daniel give,
A finer Soldier does not live.
Your highest honour condescend,
To lay on him, my dear old friend;
But he is gone—can well afford,
To disregard this world's reward.
Fred Middleton, the true and brave,
Now rests within the warrior's grave:
The Diadem and Jewels rare,
Were under his especial care.
Those treasures were not ever shown
Without his sanction, his alone;
"Regalia Keeper" he was called,

And had but lately been installed.
 "Fred," full of pluck and go and fire,
 All soldiers could not but admire ;
 His deadly spear myself I know,
 Laid many a savage Pandi low.
 We were for months on Lugard's Staff,
 "Pathfinder" Fred dubbed me, in chaff,
 For one dark night the road I lost
 When on the march, it might have cost,
 Us dearly had the foe been near,
 But they by luck did not appear :
 Lugard, the kindest of the kind,
 The mildest fault with me did find.
 As all is well that ends quite well,
 Why should I not this story tell ?
 Locality is not my forte,
 'Tis found in the uncultured sort ;
 My memory never fails to trace,
 Impressions of the human face.
 Specially if the face be fair,
 I recognize it everywhere ;
 But local features I forget,
 To my sometimes profound regret.
 For soldiers come to grief you see,
 By such a sad infirmity ;
 I hold that men with gifts for places,
 Don't as a rule remember faces.
 The eye for country you will find,
 Amongst the rudest of mankind ;
 But truly I was up a tree,
 A serious fix for Q.M.D.
 My error must have made me wince,
 I've kept the right path ever since ;
 One other loss I must record,
 A man whom all his friends deplored.

A Warder, foremost on the roll,
 To God resigned his faithful soul,
 Ere his two masters' graves were closed,
 He in his honoured tomb reposed.
 The poorer all must surely be,
 Bereft of those distinguished three.
 Poorer, I say, for mark the cost,
 A "Tower of Strength" in them is lost.
 A Veteran bids them all good-bye,
 His turn it must be soon to die.

PENNY READINGS AND ADDRESSES

ON BEHALF OF

ROYAL SCHOOL FOR DAUGHTERS OF OFFICERS, AND
 SOLDIERS' DAUGHTERS' HOME, ETC.

LETTER FROM PRIVATE THOMAS BROWN,

H.M. 25TH REGIMENT, K.O.B.

Addressed to his old mother in England.

IN old Bareilly's famous town,
 I'm landed safe at last,
 And with the grand old Twenty-fifth,
 My lot is fairly cast!

A finer set of warriors,
 Has never yet been seen;
 In any Corps within the realm,
 Of our beloved Queen!

There's something in our look and gait,
 Such manliness discloses!
 Such stalwart frames and heads erect,
 And very few snub noses!

Our Colonel is a jolly trump,
 As everybody sings ;
 His lady is a cherubin,
 A-barring of her wings !

Our officers are gentlemen,
 And always 'tis their aim,
 To render help to those who seek,
 To win their way to fame !

Of all the ills besetting us,
 In climes so piping hot,
 There's none like drinking, sends a man,
 So speedily to pot !

The sober reap a rich reward,
 And have their share of fun :
 For health and happiness are theirs,
 Despite the thirst and sun.

We've Recreation Rooms so nice,
 To Todd¹ the credit is :
 And then we have our splendid Band,
 All thanks to Mr. Davis.²

We have our Penny Readings too,
 Where tales and ditties keep,
 Men laughing, crying—and, perhaps,
 One's wafted off to sleep.

Oh ! then we have our Theatre,
 With Actors quite a score ;
 And Abbott³ always keeps the house
 In one continuous roar.

¹ Major Ruddell Todd.

² Mr. Davis was the band-master.

³ Serjeant Abbot, a born actor.

When Dimond¹ dons the petticoats,
And waves about the fan ;
I've heard the ladies whispering,
Oh! can it be a man!

Like gentle-folks, our Balls we have,
And dances who can show,
Like Riddle² and our Mrs. White,
On light fantastic toe.

I'd also name a little girl,
If Daddy won't be stuffy,
Who *does* excel, she's only twelve,
Our own sweet Polly Duffy.³

In Races none can Glorney⁴ beat,
How stag-like is his style ;
But Mulcahy is far too fleet,
For any rank-and-file!

We've Concerts too, where ladies e'en,
So kindly take a part ;
And warble songs that ravish quite,
The Tommy Atkins' heart!

And Markey⁵ chants sweet melodies,
Which none like him can sing,
Whilst Murray's grand and glorious voice,
Makes all the welkin ring.

¹ Serjeant Dimond used to take a lady's part in their plays.

² Serjeant Riddle and Mrs. White, both conspicuous in the ball-room.

³ Polly Duffy was a little girl famous for her graceful dancing.

⁴ Private Glorney was the best runner in the regiment amongst the ranks, but Captain Mulcahy could beat them all.

⁵ Serjeant Markey and Quartermaster Murray were grand singers.

In Wilson¹ we've a Cricketer,
Renowned with Bat and Ball,
But Partridge,¹ he's our Adjutant,
Soars far above them all!
At Musketry the foremost place,
We've lately taken up;
For "Ross"² has taught us how to win,
The C.-in-C.'s own cup.
And whether off or on parade,
In peace or time of war,
The foremost in this world of arms,
We cut out all by far.
In short we are a matchless Corps,
If you will credit me;
And glad I am it was my lot,
To join the K.O.B.
And now my Mother dear, good-bye,
When you are rather down,
Just think of us the Twenty-fifth,
Yours ever,—Tommy Brown.

LETTER OF PRIVATE THOMAS BROWN,
H.M. 25TH REGIMENT, K.O.B.,
DESCRIBING THE BATTLE OF BAREILLY

Addressed to his mother.

WE'VE lately had such stirring times,
As makes our blood run cold,
For every Black was up in arms,
At least so I was told.

¹ Privates Wilson and Purvis were the best cricketers in the ranks, but Lieutenant Partridge was more than a match for the men.

² Lieutenant Ross was Musketry Instructor.

At Phillibeet and Furreedpore,
And at Bareilly town,
The Niggers all were there prepared,
To knock each beggar down!

Such a rumpus, such a riot,
Was never heard before ;
What made it so outrageous,
'Twas almost at your door!

Bareilly's crowded city is,
Within a rifle-shot :
Such quarters seem uncommon close,
When strife is raging hot!

All felt the great occasion,
And ready were to die,
Provided that the row were not,
A case of "all my eye."

Then all the nobs and tearing swells,
And soldiers high and low,
Thought that now the row had reached,
A very awful go.

At dead of night they quickly roused,
The General from his bed ;
And begged he would no longer sleep,
But come and fight instead!

The Leader¹ then in haste they called,
Of Bengal Cavalry,
And hoped that his Sowars, tho' black,
Would not a bit fight shy!

Although the men they'd have to stick,
Might be their kith and kin :
"Stick them they shall," the Colonel cried,
"Mahomed's be the sin!"

¹ Myself.

Yes, yes, it was a fearful night,
When all around was clatter,
Of troops in movement, here and there,
And none knew what's the matter!

And Jack asked Bill with bated breath,
If he didn't think it rum :
And Bill replied, he rather feared,
That Ingey's end had come!

At such a time the British arm,
Must strike that all may feel ;
And woe betide the Blacks that stand,
The Twenty-fifth's cold steel!

The Colonel knew his men right well ;
"The K.O.B.s," he said,
"Were just the boys to make a noise,
When Niggers wanted lead."

Before he gave the word to march,
To paths where honour lies ;
He made those dispositions shrewd,
That guard against surprise.

We had our Pickets out in front,
And Pickets in the rear ;
With Ruddell Todd commanding there,
No Nigger could come near.

The Outram post was held all day
By Suter¹ of the choir ;
And in a fight he is a cove,
To set the Thames on fire!

To glory then we onward marched,
Our pulses beating high ;
And as we neared Bareilly town,
I felt inclined to cry!

¹ Serjeant Suter used to sing in the church choir.

For who could tell, my mother dear,
If I should e'er come back,
Or bullet swift, or nigger's knife,
Should pierce my poor stomach !

Ah ! who could tell the bitterness,
Of weeping, wailing wives :
For husbands summon'd suddenly,
To risk their precious lives !

E'en now I see that sad farewell,
Of comrades, friends, and brothers ;
The pressing of the lips and hearts,
And kiss of parting lovers !

" God keep thee thro' all ills," said one ;
" Good-bye, my darling soul ;
In every dusky skin, I hope,
You'll drill a great big hole."

Those beastly Blacks : I wonder why,
Their parents made them so ?
In face and colour they are like—
That party down below !

Kelly's¹ sweetheart sat bathed in tears
O'er her Jemmy's " stitches " ;
For master-snips were sometimes shot,
Thro' and thro' their breeches !

" Shoemaker Flynn, my own George Flynn,²
If you, by George, I lose,
My heart will burst, pray some one step,
Into my cobbler's shoes !"

¹ Kelly was master tailor.

² George Flynn was head shoemaker.

Better that "George" kept to his "last,"
For which he was inclined,
Than go to fight, and then get stuck,
In front or p'r'aps behind!

"Oh! stay," cried she who loved John Hughes,¹
"Forsake not one so true,
My faithful Butcher, cleave to me,
Let no one butcher you."

Refreshment-rooms must come to grief,
If Hughes from us is torn;
For wittals nice, O! who could make,
Or who such beef could corn!

I served with "Coulson's" Company,
That helped to quell the strife,
When all Bareilly niggers,
Were warring to the knife.

When Mussalman and Hindoo foes,
Were smashing up each other,
We, marching through Bareilly streets,
Divided one from t'other.

We showed them all our Snider guns,
And let them understand
"The Borderers" they both would find,
A very nasty band,

Of British soldiers to confront,
With Wallace² at their head;
And so they all at once shut up,
And hooked it off to bed!

¹ Head butcher, famous for his corn-beef.

² Colonel Wallace, commanding the K.O.B.

And ended thus, with little loss,
My first terrific fight ;
Details of which I thought, perhaps,
You'd like in Black and White.
A medal will be cast for us,
On one side which will tell—
Of finger to the nose's tip,
On t'other "what a sell!"
A grand despatch¹ has just gone forth,
Where all are buttered thick,
Soldiers excepted, who 'tis said,
Had really done the trick !
But "Muir,"² the Knight, was ne'er deceived,
From Gents he learnt his facts ;
These Gents had trumpets all their own,
To celebrate their acts !
And if they did crack up their feats,
Small blame to them say I ;
For where's the soldier that would deign
To noble deeds decry !
Why ! I myself a hero am,
And strangely at a loss,
To know why chaps like me have not,
The Victorina Cross !
For ever since our fight I've felt,
My heart with valour dance ;
I've thought of all I should have done,
If e'er I'd had the chance !
Once more, dear mother, fare thee well,
Think of your Tommy's crown
Of laurels at Bareilly won ;
Yours ever,—Thomas Brown.

¹ By the police authorities.

² Sir William Muir, Lieutenant-governor.

PROLOGUE WRITTEN AND DELIVERED BY
GENERAL O. WILKINSON, C.B.

*At an Entertainment given at Simla on behalf of the Royal School
for Officers' Daughters.*

'Tis now the universal way,
That Senators arrange
To nobble half our scanty pay,
By what is called "*Exchange*."¹

And our benignant Government,
By dodges such as these,
The Captains and the "Subs" have sent,
To "short street"—if you please.

And thus arose that common rule,
To plead "hard up" by all—
But say to-night, if my pet School,
Shall henceforth stand or fall.

'Tis only those who often ask,
Assistance for the poor ;
Can tell the snubs and thankless task,
One meets from door to door !

I'm told up here by trusty friends,
No matter where I roam,
That charity begins, and ends—
Unluckily at home !

There comes, they say, "The Squire"² again,
Insatiate old fool ;
The beggar thinks we're bound to drain,
Our purses for his School.

¹The loss in Exchange had begun to be serious.

² I was always called the Squire.

As if the girls at Bath alone,
Our sympathies should claim;
And "Brats" with scorn we should disown,
Without a Bath School name!

Ah! well I know, I often crave,
A comrade's helping hand;
For those whose fathers died to save,
Our own beloved land!

That man must be a brute indeed,
Inhuman, base, defiled;
That cares not for a widow's need,
To feed her darling child.

Now, whilst the School's declining state¹
Seem'd tending to'ards perdition,
I heard a voice,—no more debate,—
But try an Exhibition!

By Jove! I will. Relief is near—
Well done the happy thought,
I seized at once the grand idea,
By inspiration wrought.

If Liddell² now is in the trim,
That clever A.D.C.,
And talents Nature gave to him
He'll kindly lend to me!

I felt success repaid all pains,
When that good fellow said:
Welcome, dear Sir, to all the brains
Within a "Sammy's"² head!

¹ Funds were declining.

² Captain Samuel Liddell, A.D.C. to the Commander-in-Chief.

The "Marshall"¹ next I did engage,
 To personate a part—
 Field-Marshal he, on every stage
 Unmatched in mimic art.

I've coax'd MacCall² to warble strains,
 That ravish "Wood Ville" Belles,
 When Lady and Sir Fred'rick Haines,
 Do entertain their swells!

His grace entrances in the Rink,
 Is charming in the Ball—
 (Don't mention this) the ladies think,
 No rival has MacCall!

I then invoked the Elder "Chod,"³
 That vulgar parvenu—
 His "rôle" to-night will change the clod
 To Ochterlony true!

As "Chod" or "Strop"—no matter what—
 He seems to me a stunner,
 At all his parts a right good shot,
 As well becomes a gunner!

Le Mesurier,⁴ the soul of song,
 (His wife, not him, I mean,)
 Von Goldstein, and the "Pop" have long,
 Acknowledg'd her the queen.

'Tis said, the fair ones in Corfu⁵
 Can sing from early birth—
 That Isle must be, if this be true,
 A Paradise on earth!

¹ Captain Marshall.

² Captain MacCall, A.D.C.

³ Captain Ochterlony acted the parts of the Elder Chod and Strop in some theatricals.

⁴ Colonel Le Mesurier. Von Goldstein was proprietor of the "Pop," where musical entertainments were given.

⁵ Mrs. Le Mesurier was a native of Corfu.

To swell the glees, melodious treat—
 To "Lytton's" Bard I turn—
 In whom the flame of music sweet,
 Shall ever—"Owen"—"Burn."¹

Behold the two ladies who neither,
 Can claim a precedence to-day:
 How happy should *I* be with either,
 Were t'other dear charmer away!

Does not the "Crom'lin's"² vocal star,
 Our very souls inspire?
 Did not her "Voce poco far"
 Electrify our choir?

Does not the gallant Col'nel's wife,³
 Whose equal *he* won't "Brook,"
 Give charm to e'en the dullest life,
 By song and p'raps her "look"?

If Orpheus and Cecilia dear,
 Were blended both together;
 I still, sweet "Brook," would rather hear,
 THY song flow on for ever!

The priests who reason soberly,
 Feel sadly in the lurch,
 Whilst laymen win, like "Moberly,"⁴
 Such honours in their church!

In pulpit and in choral range
 Ring forth his notes so clear,
 That "Mathews" would to Parson change,
 That Staff Corps Engineer!

¹ Sir Owen Burn.

² Mrs. Crommelin.

³ Wife of Colonel Brooke.

⁴ Colonel Moberly used to read the lessons and sing in the choir for Padre Mathews.

Great "Val"¹ from his artistic lore,
Shall sketch, in Nursery Rhymes,
Those graphic scenes that wake once more,
Our boyish by-gone times!

Should "Batten"² help! "Aye, there's the rub,"
For matchless muse is he—
And he directs that famous Club,
With their Æolian glee!

The Orpheus Band, the last unsung,
Fulfil a "youthful" mission,
For "Mackworth"³ grows each day more "*Young*"
And leads "The Young Musician."

My game to-night must win the trick,
Without a doubt or fear—
A trump I hold, that butters thick,
'Tis Allen's⁴ "Pioneer"!

His paper all the world attracts;
Yet here, he snubs his wife:
But these are only playful acts,
In his theatric life.

Though here they snap and bandy words,
In justice I declare,
They coo at home like Dickey birds,
Are such a "Happy Pair."

By recitations oft my "*Twin*,"
Has gained a reputation—
And trusts to-day to fairly win,
Some further approbation!

¹ Val Prinsep the artist. ² George Batten, famous vocal artist.

³ Mackworth Young—now Sir Mackworth. The band played "The Young Musician."

⁴ Now Sir George Allen. He and his wife acted the "Happy Pair" at this entertainment.

And *I* would also, fain, beseech,
Your kind consideration,
Indulgence for the maiden speech,
By me, his twin relation.

The Orphans have a tower of strength
Within these walls to-night,
In him¹ who rules throughout its length
The Punjab in his might.

Whilst warriors fierce he holds at bay,
How gentle is his mien !
Though "Sikhs" may crouch beneath his sway,
On him a child may lean.

With Lord and Lady Lytton's aid,
With Chief and all his Staff,
The cause I plead can never fade,
Can never end in chaff !

When Lord of all this vast domain,
His welcome doth accord ;
I feel I have not worked in vain,
Nor gone without reward !

From those who loll in lap of wealth,
Who bask in Fortune's smile,
From sunny youth, and buxom health,
I pray you turn awhile.

And think of children sore bereft,
Of parents' love and care ;
And mourn for widows lonely left,
In hopeless, dark despair.

Alleviate their lot, I pray,
O ! hear a soldier plead :
With wars around us, none can say,
Whose turn it is to bleed !

¹ Sir P. Egerton, a stalwart but gentle gentleman.

Resolve, before you quit this floor—
 Whilst pity warms your breast—
 To aid that "haven," where the poor
 And orphan child finds rest.

I have some claim to your support,
 For ten long years can tell,
 How I—the Bath School battle fought
 With might and main—Farewell.

A FAREWELL ADDRESS

TO H.M. 15TH REGIMENT (EAST YORK REGT.¹)

*Written on the return of the Highlanders, Riflemen, Fusiliers,
 and Marines from the Ashantee War, when reviewed by the
 Czar of Russia and the Queen.*

(THIS WAS ALSO ONE OF A SERIES OF "PENNY READINGS")

EACH Briton just now with envy regards,
 The kilts that adorn the trouserless Scotch;
 For Highlanders all are really such cards,
 That nothing goes down but bonny "Black Watch."

But, comrades, if you had only the chance,
 Behind the Black Watch you'd never be far,
 Ashantees you'd lead the very same dance,
 For who could withstand the brave E.Y.R.?

'Tis true the Marines fresh laurels have won,
 And every one lauds the jolly Jack Tar—
 Blue jacket and red, their duty have done—
 You daily do that, my brave E.Y.R.

¹ My twin-brother's regiment.

Nor would I detract from Rifleman's praise,
Nor Fusilier deeds with jealousy mar ;
But cheers quite as loud the people would raise,
If you'd been engaged, my brave E.Y.R.

I see you advance, led on by my "Twin,"
Who shouts with a will : "Boys, forrard, hurrah !"
No matter the odds, to-day we will win,
And add to our fame, my brave E.Y.R.

Then "Twyman"¹ I see, the Major so brave,
Who never yet let an obstacle bar,
The path of a man who glory would crave,—
So "forrard," he cries, my brave E.Y.R.

Then "Daniel" behold, an officer rare,
By Adjutants all considered a star ;
Where danger appals he's sure to be there,
And sure to cheer on the brave E.Y.R.

"La Mottée,"² renown'd for biceps and chest,
Will plant on the nose a merciless scar,
For has he not pass'd athletic the test,
Gymnastic he shines, the strong E.Y.R.

"Springhall,"³ the Serjeant, so smart and so tall,
With Black man or White quite ready to spar,
Cries : "Close up, my men,—if fated to fall,
Like Britons we'll die, my brave E.Y.R."

With "Oddie"⁴ to teach the young 'uns to shoot,
And "Murphy"⁵ to touch the banjo-guitar,
With "Tommy"⁵ to sing or play on the lute :
O ! conquer we must, my brave E.Y.R.

¹ Major Twyman.

² Captain La Mottée, the Gymnast Instructor.

³ The Serjeant-major. ⁴ Captain Oddie, Instructor of Musketry.

⁵ Captain Murphy and Captain Thomas, both musicians.

Then violin "Slim," and "Nangle's"¹ refrain
On "Bumble" will pierce the welkin afar ;
They'll fiddle and strum a glorious strain,
To frenzy arouse the brave E.Y.R.

Then manly young "Chops"² will worry the steaks,
And "Shortland"³ will steer the nautical car ;
For water or land no difference makes,
To "Admirals" bred in the brave E.Y.R.

There's "Garnet,"⁴ so closely to Woolsy allied,
If aught's in a name, e'en greater than "Shah,"
A jewel at games, a gem undenied,
And just the right sort for brave E.Y.R.

Ere long he vacates, if rumour be true,
And all are reduced to utter lachār,⁵
Which means in the East that soldiers look blue,
'Cos Garnet deserts the brave E.Y.R.

And where will you match that handsome man "Tew,"⁶
By Guards, or Dragoon, or dashing Hussar—
New Zealanders say he can fight a few,
A caution he is, the brave E.Y.R.

That heart must be cold and senseless as lead,
That glows not when "Keech,"⁷ with brilliant *éclat*,
Sings songs that would tend to waken the dead,
Drum-major he is, a grand E.Y.R.

¹ Captain Nangle, who played on the violoncello, called "the Bumble."

² Captain Allen was called Chops, as he was good at steaks.

³ Captain Shortland was fond of the sea, and called the Admiral.

⁴ Captain Garnet, great at games of all kinds.

⁵ Helpless.

⁶ Captain Tew, a handsome man, and had been engaged in the Zulu War.

⁷ Drum-major Keech.

When "Wyatt"¹ on lute or piccolo sweet,
Alternately sounds a ravishing bar;
Breathes there the man that feels not the treat,
Nor Wyatt pronounce a true E.Y.R.

Now when you have thrash'd creation outright,
And hungry, and faint, and thirsty you are;
Stout Pigott's² the boy to set you all right,
He's always a glass, the great E.Y.R.

If "Pigott," by chance, you should not behold,
There's "Joseph,"³—no kin to poor Poti-phar—
He's ever at hand the mess to uphold,
Look after its wants, a real E.Y.R.

Her warriors soon, our dearly lov'd Queen,
Will proudly display, t' astonish the Czar;
That monarch in war so clever and keen,
Will envy the land their brave E.Y.R.

If heroes like these your Army compose,
No wonder, he'll say, you lick'd my papa;
I'd conquer the world whenever I chose,
If Russians resembled the brave E.Y.R.

Now bound for the East, I give you advice,
Before I record my final ta-ta,
If bent on a wife, and one that is nice,
Choose from the ranks of the brave E.Y.R.

"Paisley,"⁴ professor of beauty and art,
Who ball-room adorns with spangle and star,
Will tell you with pride, the girl of his heart
Was born and was bred in the brave E.Y.R.

¹ Serjeant Wyatt, a noted musician. ² Pigott, the stout mess-man.

³ Joseph, the assistant mess-man.

⁴ Serjeant Paisley, who used to get up and adorn all the ball-rooms.

In "Indy" a thirst will often prevail,
And liquor enough I would not debar—
But keep within bounds, whatever assail,
Don't drink to excess, my brave E.Y.R.

The soldier, when hungry, sober, and wise,
Should enter the portals always ajar,
Where "Kenny"¹ refreshments dainty supplies,
With aid of his wife, a true E.Y.R.

At "Publics" like these the passions are tamed,
'Tis here will collect the smartest by far;
Soldiers, like "Quin,"² for gallantry famed,
Teetotallers pledg'd, the brave E.Y.R.

If firmly from drink you'll try to abstain,
You'll safely rejoin your loving mamma,
Relations and friends will greet you again,
And welcome you home, my brave E.Y.R.

Of climate, some think, 'tis needless to care,
With these, I'm afraid, my sentiments jar,
I may be a muff, but soldiers beware,
Be prudent, I say, my brave E.Y.R.

Mix freely in sports, they never do harm,
And this is confirmed by Austin,³ aha!
For ladies his wife has always a charm,
She's nursed all their brats, a dear E.Y.R.

Before I conclude, allow me a toast,
I drink to "Pat Short,"⁴ grave-digger—hurrah!
Assistant-canteen, his favourite post,
And honour'd by all, a brave E.Y.R.

¹ Serjeant Kenny, who with his wife used to keep the refreshment-room.

² Serjeant Quin, a teetotaller.

³ Serjeant Austin, whose wife was always in great request in the regiment.

⁴ Pat Short, here called the grave-digger, was assistant-canteen.

At "Readings" I've heard my brother recite,
So thought I would keep with him on a par,
I therefore resolved some verses to write,
And twin-like amuse the brave E.Y.R.

And now, E.Y.R., I hasten away,
I've spun out the yarn I promised to tell,
All glory and fame await you I pray,
Soldiers, I bid you a hearty farewell!

AN ADDRESS TO THE SOLDIERS' DAUGHTERS'
HOME AT THEIR CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

7th January, 1898.

ON all who may attend to-day,
This happy Christmas meeting,
For blessings I devoutly pray,
And send my New Year's greeting!

May every bosom, young and old,
Beneath that Christmas Tree;
As gifts each moment joys unfold,
Rebound with mirth and glee!

May those who have already spent¹
The first fresh bloom of youth,
Be now, as ever, still intent,
On innocence and truth.

May nothing mar the festive scene,
Let fun and frolic play;
O strip that Tree, and strip it clean,
And join the roundelay!

¹ The old girls (visitors).

But in the joyous hours of mirth,
 Whilst all things seem to smile,
 O! children, turn your thoughts from earth,
 And ponder for awhile!

To the Giver of all good hold fast,
 With inmost heart and soul,
 And He will shield you to the last,
 Till you have reached the goal!

Think of Miss Bartlett, matron true,
 Your mainstay and support,
 Who dedicates her life to you,
 Her one and only thought!

Think of Miss Anderson,¹ your Cook,
 Miss Johnson too, your Teacher,
 And study well that sacred Book
 With Man-of-kirk,"² your preacher!

Miss Anderson a cook I've styled,
 Because with kindly heart,
 She bound herself to teach each child,
 The culinary Art.

And thus her pupils have become
 Experts as cooks and wise
 In dainties of all sorts, and some
 Have won the Napier Prize!

'Twas Lady Napier, ever kind,
 The soldiers' daughters' friend,
 Who first the Cooking School designed,
 Proclaimed its aim and end!

¹ Assistant-matron, but teacher in cookery.

² Mr. Kirkman.

Miss Anderson then assumed the lead,
And one and all confess,
The school in cooking is indeed
A model of success!

Your Chairman¹ (vice) your prayers would ask,
(Though "vice" he is not vicious,)
And strengthened thus he feels his task,
This year must be propitious!

Absent in body though I be,²
My spirit soaring near
Will hover round that Christmas Tree,
O'er those to me so dear!

If soldiers' daughters would repay,
Their Matron's care and love,
They must endeavour day by day,
To live for Heaven above!

If to be good they would succeed,
They must by virtue's laws,
Mature each pious thought and deed,
Without a moment's pause!

When Conscience prompts to what is right,
In conflict with the devil,
'Tis fatal, girls, in such a fight,
To halt 'tween good and evil!

But for this Home (which God defend),
Think of the hapless state,
Of girls forlorn, without a friend,
What must have been their fate!

¹ Myself.

² Was not well enough to attend.

The time must come, perhaps not yet,
When you afar will roam,
O! then, dear children, don't forget,
The Soldiers' Daughters' Home!

To the Visitors all

Before to-night you disappear
To join your dear ones, near and far,
O! let the soldiers' daughters cheer
For their own "Home"—Hurrah!—
Hip, hip, hip, hip,—Hurrah!

ODDS AND ENDS

WRITTEN IN A YOUNG LADY'S ALBUM ON BOARD
THE GOOD SHIP *BANGALORE* THE EVENING
BEFORE HER ARRIVAL AT BOMBAY

OF Bangalore days you bid me discourse,
Days that are fleeting a little too soon ;
Shall I sing of that Colonel of Indian Horse,
Who sat by your side in that stuffy saloon ?

Old soldiers, you know, are certainly rare,
Who do not adore the maiden divine :
And seated beside a damsel so fair,
Of course he neglects his dinner and wine.

We laughed, and we chaffed, who knows not the charm,
Which social enjoyment so happily lends ;
To old and to young when neither means harm,
And seek to be only the fastest of friends !

And if it be true a handsome young swain
Has stolen your heart, as little birds tell,
I trust, if we meet on a steamer again,
I'll find you unchanged, God bless you—farewell !

This young lady was going out to India to be married, and her
fiancé was on the pier awaiting her arrival—ever so many years ago !

TO PETER LUMSDEN ON HIS SENDING ME A DONATION OF FIVE POUNDS TOWARDS THE EXPENSES OF MY LECTURE ON "ELOCUTION," IN BEHALF OF THE ST. GABRIEL'S BOYS' INSTITUTION

My "Elocution" work is done,
And figures true express,
How I, at Grosvenor Hall, have won,
An "Eloquent" success!

St. Gabriel's lads exulting say,
That nothing could be finer;
For fifty pounds, on Lecture day,
He cleared with Peter's five.

'Tis one of nature's wisest laws,
And nothing could be sweeter:
That triumph must attend a cause
When backed by dear old Peter!

The debt of gratitude I owe,
To you, my kindest friend:
I pay in feeble words, I know,
What else have I to send?

January 28, 1886.

TO MISS —, EXPLAINING TO HER THAT SHE COULD VOTE FOR BOTH MISS GREENWOOD AND MISS LINDSAY, CANDIDATES FOR THE ROYAL SCHOOL AT BATH, AND SUGGESTING THAT THE SISTERS SHOULD DOUBLE THEIR SUBSCRIPTIONS

YOU are, my Mary, far from clear,
Your mind is in a foggy state;
For you can claim eight votes, my dear,
When vacancies amount to eight!

But rule there is which fully states
That *this*, my friend, can ne'er be done ;
You cannot ever club your votes,
Eight votes you cannot give to one !

And now, I hope, 'tis clearly seen,
In Greenwood's and in Lindsay's case,
You vote for both, unless you're green,
'Tis plain as nose upon your face !

The time will come, when I am gone,
And all my chaff is hushed and still,
You sisters both will feel forlorn,
Subscribe two-fold, ah ! that you will !

February 27, 1890.

TO MISS CUBITT ON HER ANNUAL GATHERING,
WHICH ILLNESS PREVENTED MY JOINING

REJOICE, rejoice, ye happy things,
All under Lucy's sway ;
Rejoice, rejoice, all nature sings,
On this Lucynian day !

They know, who share this annual treat,
They may depend on this,
That fêtes when held by Lucy sweet,
Are always fraught with bliss.

As I upon my weary bed,
A poor sick soldier lie,
I think how I should like instead
To join your revelry !

For though I have been sick to death,
And very nearly done,
And though I've gasped and choked for breath,
I still feel full of fun!

And from my heart, I hope this day.
Has passed without alloy!
Has been to young and old, I pray
A scene of perfect joy!

Next year I shall be all prepared,
If free from aches and pains,
To be your guest, if I am spared,
And be a boy again!

TO AN OFFICER WHO EXPRESSED HIS INABILITY
TO BECOME A SUBSCRIBER TO THE SOLDIERS'
DAUGHTERS' HOME, BUT HOPED TO DO SO SOME
DAY

IF times should change, and you should feel,
A man so rich instead of poor;
You won't forget my last appeal,
When I stood knocking at your door!

You will recall what then you said,
When your refusal made me sore,
That you some day would lend your aid
When I perhaps am seen no more!

TO MY VERY DEAR OLD FRIEND, MRS. LAING, IN
ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SOME GLASS ORNAMENTS
FOR THE TABLE, CHRISTMAS DAY

O! THANKS, kind friend, a thousand thanks,
A gift from you I deem,
So precious, that it always ranks,
The first in my esteem!

Does not each gay and ribboned cup,
With sympathy o'er-flow?
I know the hand that filled it up,
I feel the debt we owe!

Brimful of love, upon your store,
Where costly treasures blend;
Rare gifts you oft delight to draw,
To gladden some old friend!

Many a year has flitted past,
Since you stepped forth to save;
When my poor wife was failing fast,
You snatched her from the grave!

When we were deeply plunged in grief,
By troubles sore beset,
'Twas you who first brought us relief;
Can we such love forget?

Whilst memory shall not wholly fade,
Till heart shall cease to beat;
We shall recall your generous aid,
And sympathy so sweet!

Our days seemed then all blighted, cursed,
My prospects all destroyed,
The Mutiny had done its worst,
And I was "unemployed"!

Through our Financial Minister,¹
Who counted all the cost;
When days were black and sinister,
We got back what we lost!

No link has in our friendship's chain,
For forty years been broken;
Nor does it after this long strain,
A single flaw betoken!

There is a thought that fills my heart,
Inflicts the sharpest pang;
That we some day must surely part,
With you, dear Mrs. Laing!

A friend like you we cannot spare,
Then leave us not, I pray;
Remain at least, 'tis only fair,
Till I have passed away!

Our summons now cannot be far,
Let all our thoughts be given,
To things above—to that bright star,
Which beckons us to Heaven!

REFLECTIONS ON "MARSYAS, THE EPIC OF HADES,"
I SENT TO CLIFFORD HARRISON ON HIS RECITAL
OF MARSYAS

THIS epic dark of dismal Hades,
Divinely though Apollo sings,
Warns us, vain men and tuneless ladies,
Melodious gods are ticklish things!

¹ Mr. Laing.

Marsyas brave, but lacking brains,
 He pickled for himself a rod,
 When he essayed with human strains,
 To rival Phœbus, Music's god!

It served him right, the Heathens said,
 Altho' his tortures made them shiver,
 That he alive should first be flayed,
 And then become a Phrygian river!

MORAL

When men immortal gods defy,
 They risk their very vitals;
 'Tis better far that they rely
 On Harrison's recitals.

ON LEAVING WEST HAY, 15TH AUGUST, 1891

TO TOM AND AMY

FAREWELL, old Tom and Amy dear,
 'Tis hard to part—may we retain,
 One soothing thought, that you next year
 Will warmly welcome us again?

The greatest treat in our life's way,
 On which we always most rely,
 Is over now—adieu, West Hay,
 With all thy lovely scenes—good-bye!

Last year I sang your praise; to-day,
 Upon the self-same theme I dwell;
 I vow that you, in dear West Hay,
 Unrivalled stand—again farewell.

I would a heavy wager lay,
That such a combination rare,
As Amy, Tommy, and West Hay,
Was never, never seen elsewhere.

Whilst basking in these charms, we feel,
As every moment we delay ;
An inclination o'er us steal,
To cling more fondly to West Hay !

But hark, a voice, 'tis Gibbons¹ calls,
'Tis time to tear yourselves away ;
The fly has come,—confound his squalls,
Oh ! must we leave ? Adieu, West Hay !

With heads bowed down, and hearts so sore,
At this our parting now, we pray,
That God His richest gifts will pour
On all connected with West Hay.

TO DONALD MACNABB, THE LITTLE BRICK, WHO IS
GOING TO BUILD A HOUSE WITH ONE ROOM
EXPRESSLY DESIGNED FOR US

To build a brand-new house is rare,
When destined for one's friends ;
And he who hopes your hearth to share,
His gratulation sends.

You always were to us a Brick,
Without a single flaw ;
A Brick that does so firmly stick,
Though made without a straw !

¹ The butler.

Close joined with friendship's mortar fine,
Which binds all bricks together,
When bricks themselves their plans design,
Their houses last for ever!

When we at length "Mac—nab" our room,
We'll dub it Donald—bus,
"Humuru Kumru," not for "toom,"
As it was built for us!

We'll let you use it now and then,
Whilst we retain the powers:
To oust at once the wretched men,
Who won't admit 'tis ours!

As time is fleeting; I am keen
To see your pledge fulfilled;
If business, Mac, you really mean,
Our room begin to build!

Dear Donald, plead no more delays,
Before we quit this earth,
We'll spend with you some happy days,
In our long-promised berth!

We'll keep a corner snug, I vow,
For your dear brother Jim;
But such a boon we can't allow,
To any one but him!

Look sharp, look sharp, and get to work,
Or we shall be consigned
To tenement close by the kirk,
And not by you designed!

Should friends who know our room inquire,
And find of me no trace,
You'd have to say—the good old Squire,
Has gone to his own place.

TO MAUD, MY SWAFFHAM COUSIN, IN PAYMENT
OF A DEBT, AND WITH REFERENCE TO THE PRO-
PRIETY OR OTHERWISE OF SUCH A PAYMENT :
THE DEBT OF ONE PENNY BEING A GAMBLING
ONE

*The wager was laid on George Gosling having beaten her brother
Charles in the Little-Go examination at Cambridge.*

O SEER of events each day,
Discerner of the past,
To bet with you will never pay,
I've found that out at last !

Altho' I'm sharp, and much inclined,
The winning side to choose ;
When betting with a "sharper" mind,
One's almost sure to lose !

In all "Big Go's" where Charley fought,
I knew he licked the rest ;
But then in "Little Go's" I thought,
He might be second best !

But I was wrong, and I am floored,
And I'm completely done ;
A first-class chap, your brother, Maud,
Must always be A1 !

Blue ruin stares me in the face,
Stupendous awful cost ;
O ! Maudie, pity my disgrace,
My last, lone copper lost !

When I for that rash bet went in,
Entangled in your noose ;
I might have known that Charles would win,
As Gosling is a goose !

But since I learnt that gambling trick,
By your example set,
I felt I ought (does conscience prick?)
To confiscate that bet!
If gambling debts illegal be,
However great or small;
The plan to follow I can see,
Is not to pay at all!
But if such scruples I defend,
You'll think me half a dunce;
A penny stamp I therefore send,
Don't spend it all at once!

MORAL

If Maud would fain a wager stake,
As is the Tempter's wont,
I'd say to all, for mercy's sake,
My dearest cousins—don't.

TO MAUD AGAIN, COMPLAINING OF HER HAVING
FAILED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE PAYMENT OF MY
DEBT OF A PENNY STAMP, AS SHOWN IN THE
FOREGOING

WHEN I, your cousin, pay my debt,
I think it only meet;
Altho' it was a gambling bet,
I should have some receipt!
Without a voucher, who can tell,
You might, if in the vein,
Inflict on me the cruel sell,
Of stumping up again.

You seem, besides, to quite forget,
That pennyworth of verse ;
I sent with that 'ere stamp, my pet,
Oh! Maud, you are perverse !

To treat a coz with silent scorn,
How could you go and do it?
As sure as ever you were born,
You certainly will rue it!

Your cold, ignoring attitude,
Reminds me of a scamp,
Who bagged, with base ingratitude,
My last and only stamp!

With me, perhaps, you think it best,
To have another wäger?
If this be so, I would suggest,
A less experienced stager!

Just like a wretch, condemned to die,
Who pants for his reprieve ;
I've watched the post with eager eye,
For postmen ne'er deceive ;

But though each postman had a hoard,
Of letters sealed and signed,
There was not one from you, my Maud,
Which I thought most unkind.

If you go on in this loose way,
You'll come to sore disgrace!
And naughty will be stamped some day,
Upon your pretty face!

"Stamp" out the past, your name win back,
Which suffered much, I ween ;
When you my copper won, alack,
Whilst I was soft and green!

And I'll forgive you, that I will,
For all you've done to me,
For, Maudie, coz, I love thee still,
I'm still the same to thee!

THE RISK OF DIVING TOO DEEPLY INTO PEDIGREES

THE searchers into Pedigrees,
Unearth some truths that fail to please ;
Unlock the past with trusty key,
They may regret the scrutiny ;
For things leak out which they repent,
Deeds dark and inconvenient :
Ancestors bared to lurid light
May occupy a painful plight !
To banish *all*, I much prefer,
Than one "bad hat" to disinter !
Objections to resuscitate,
Our dead, I briefly will relate,
By plain and simple illustration,
A loving relative's creation.
This relative desired to see,
Our grand, ancestral, honoured Tree,
With Scotchman's curiosity !
Such quests are in the canny line,
But as a Cockney are not mine !
With care he did his search pursue,
With naught to mar, at first, his view. .
For each succeeding generation,
Disclosed, it seemed, no revelation !
And most respectable we were,
In higher classes this is rare ;
The searcher thought that he could trace,
A line just like his own fine race,

But suddenly there started up,
 One who in life had drained the cup,
 Of which *they* only ever drink,
 Of whom we are ashamed to think!
 What this black sheep—a baddish lot—
 Had done deponent sayeth not!
 P'r'aps stole a sheep? deserved to swing,
 For doing such a sheepish thing;
 Perhaps some tyrant's neck he wrung,
 For that—of course, he would be hung!
 The crime the searcher ne'er revealed,
 For shame the secret he concealed;
 Our Pedigrees he has forsworn,
 Such tests he is inclined to scorn!
My ancestors he now has dropped,
 In place of mine, his own has swapped!
 This tale a story rank may be,
 I tell it as 'twas told to me,
 By whom, just now I can't recall,
 But that won't signify at all!

TO MRS. S—, IN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE
 PRESENT OF A CHEST-PRESERVER, WHICH SHE
 WORKED WITH HER OWN HANDS

A "COMFORTER" thou art indeed,
 With all a woman's care;
 In sheltered paths my steps you lead,
 And teach me what to *wear*!

 With doubtful lungs, and weakly chest,
 No remedy had I;
 But now with such a cosy vest,
 The world I can defy.

My wife, in her solicitude,
Has followed me about ;
Like petted dog, she *would* intrude,
In all my goings out !

But now with all complacency,
She bids me go my way ;
And does not say so constantly—
Don't venture out to-day !

In—"vested" thus my dearest wife,
Thinks I am safe and sound ;
I have a brand-new lease of life,
In this "investment" found.

And did your own sweet fingers knit
This wrap? 'Tis quite perfection !
How could you know that it would fit ?
Oh ! that's a puzzling question !

From chest right round to my backbone,
It nicely does environ ;
But tell me how the size was known,
Without a previous try on ?

And as I gazed on each dear stitch,
Oh ! how my heart did burn ;
Oh ! how my fingers then did itch,
To make you some return !

Thus knitted to a neighbour kind,
Unfailing "comforter,"
I have resolved in my great mind,
To be your trumpeter !

You've sown your stitches, *I* my oats,
And wildish ones, I fear ;
A moral each I think denotes,
I can't say what, my dear !

Knit on, knit on, and stitch and stitch,
Let us be wove together ;
And be we poor, or be we rich,
We'll now despise the weather !

True friendship's warmth is kept up best,
As " Edward " will explain ;
By woollen wrap close round the chest,
Against the cold and rain !

Let winds grow cold and colder still,
To me it is no matter !
For safe I am from every chill
With Mrs. S——'s wrapper !

FROM THE REV. DOUGLAS ELLISON—ACKNOWLEDG-
ING A CONTRIBUTION FOR A SUPPLY OF COALS
TO THE POOR IN THE VERY COLD WEATHER—TO
MY WIFE

OH ! General Wilkinson's sweet wife,
And far his better half,
Accept the grateful thanks I bring,
In earnest—not in chaff.

As fires of my poor folks had reached
Almost to a " full-stop,"
Your kindly help has made them put
A " colon " on the top !

To many a semi-" colon " now,
The General brings new life ;
And as each to the " comma " comes
For coal, I'll praise his wife !

MY REPLY TO THE FOREGOING

HEREWITH I send my coal-black lines,
Transcribed by my own hand ;
These jokes I dug from jokund mines,
Which you will understand !

And as they lay in fathoms deep,
Geologists do lie,
Who say such jokes can never keep,
Can never petrify !

I own a stratum full of puns,
A bed but known to me :
I know exactly where it runs,
And pick out jests for thee !

There never was in this wide earth,
Thoughts more sublime and clever ;
Than those to which we both give birth,
When we hob-nob together !

And having thus performed our work,
Becoming our position ;
The poor despising jest and quirk,
Will help our coal-ition !

But jokes apart—may you and I
Of good works never tire ;
But coals in winter ever ply
Upon the poor man's fire !

TO THE REV. DOUGLAS ELLISON (IN CONTINUATION)

ALTHO' you, Douglas, are a cold 'un,
And have just now a cold ;
You'll warmly greet, I know, an old 'un,
And do what you are told.

Then strike a light, a glow impart,
To every poor man's fire ;
To cheer his hearth, and warm his heart,
It is my fond desire !

Crack the coal on when you get 'em,
Not the half, but put the whole on,
Good men do it, if you let 'em,
And dem the semi-colon.

By halves do nothing, my dear "Dug,"
The whole *hog* go, I say ;
This maxim to your bosom hug,
And never "stop" half-way !

And as regards my better half,
Her views appear to be
Unsound, and bad—now, don't you laugh
When she contends with me.

You've heaped your "colons" on my head,
O! blow your punctuation !
You must, I fancy, be well bred,
Of some "colonial" nation !

I've kept your "pauses" on the hop,
As far as was compatible ;
Your "colons," "semi," and "full-stop,"
The only ones com-a-table.

I wonder, yes, I sometimes wonder,
If any living soul,
Has e'er, without a doubt or blunder,
Found diamonds in coal!

It may, of course, I know be so,
And may go on for ever!
I only say, from long ago,
That I have seen it never;

Me Milton might have tried to twit
About my coal-black rhyme,
For he quite blind to realms of wit,
Was stupidly sublime!

Great Milton's mill no doubt contained
A ton of thoughts refined;
For Paradise was lost and gained,
By his prodigious mind!

Of Shakespeare I have always had,
Opinions rather queer;
For poets, "shaky," must be bad,
In wielding pen or "spear."

O! ye buyers and ye "sellers,"
With your "cellars" full of coals,
What a "sell" for *uncoaled* fellers,
Shivering now, oh! dear, in shoals;

My Duggy, you are free from blame,
You pity fire-less souls:
With fiery heart, and all aflame,
You send them tons of coals!

By charity like yours one learns,
The worth of coals and coke,
Which brightly burn, and warm by turns,
And never end in smoke!

As Poet—not a Laureate,
Worth ten of Tennysons,
I write, I sing, and I create,
And so my Poem runs !
How smooth it is, the brimming river,
Where lusty trout do play ;
And as I watch them, how I shiver,
On such an icy day !
Such jokes at Folkestone I did poke
At folks who “see” the “sea,”
But blind they are to any joke,
That scintillates from me !
So as my thoughts seemed good for naught,
I thought of one good plan ;
To send them where they would be thought
So good—to thee, good man !

TO THE REV. J. ELLISON, APOLOGIZING FOR MY
ABSENCE FROM THE MEETING OF THE PARISH
SIDESMEN

As Sidesman of St. Gabriel's Church
I feel I have done wrong ;
I left you, Vicar, in the lurch,
When bound to come out strong !
For some important Parish work,
You summoned us last night,
But I, alas, appeared a shirk,
For I forgot it quite.
A hearty dinner has such charms,
That one too often sinks,
Within oblivious soothing arms,
Which ends in forty winks !

And this exactly was my fate,
For I fell fast asleep ;
And thus I could not, till too late,
My pledge with Johnny keep.

As clock struck nine (I then had dined),
When Sidesmen all were due,
I calmly in my chair reclined,
And dreamt perhaps of you.

If funds you want, I'll send a cheque,
Just now I have run dry !
If 'tis dishonoured, do not reck,
You'll know the reason why !

TO MISS R—, DESCRIBING THE PLEASANT TEA-PARTY
GIVEN US BY HER SAILOR NEPHEW AT GREEN-
WICH, AND THE TIMELY AID AFFORDED BY MISS
A— IN THE MATTER OF THE CAB FARE—JULY 4.
1893—ON OUR RETURN HOME

I VALUE not my bobs a straw,
But still it is a precious bore,
When bound to pay the cabby's fare
To find my pockets all were bare !
The only coin in my possession,
Was half a franc, a frank confession ;
How it got there I cannot say,
I only know 'twas there that day !
To be so strangely up a tree,
When coming from a Greenwich spree,
And with Miss R—'s nephew brave,
A middy born to rule the wave !
Yes, yes, those jolly British tars,
Not less beloved by aunts than ma's !

To me adorable they seem,
When backed with strawberries and cream
Whilst sitting in that grand saloon,
Where tea was served that afternoon,
(Excuse this very long digression,
It has arrested my progression).
Well, cabby stood at my friend's door
His fare he wanted, nothing more.
Handsome the cab—but not the man,
To gainsay this no mortal can ;
Yes—there he stood, unlike a Gaul,
He liked not Gallic coins at all ;
In fact, refused to take my tin,
Implied I wished to take him in ;
But he was not a man to slumber
And so referred me to his “number” !
I thus was in a sad dilemma,
Without a rap, in fact, a beggar !
Most opportunely came a maid,
Who thus to me politely said,
To pay their fares all Generals ought,
This much at least, *I* always thought.
But if you have not got the money,
Which I admit is rather funny,
Of course a girl who plays the fiddle¹
Would wish to solve this puzzling riddle ;
And so (she said) I am most willing
To let you have my only shilling !
The General then did not seem shabby,
To that—at first, suspicious cabby,
And if Miss H——² too, had seen
(With us that pretty girl had been)
My awkward fix, she then and there

She was a violinist.

² Another young lady.

Would Christian-like have paid the fare ;
Your two nice girls will tell the rest,
I'm not quite sure which I like best.
Happy with either, I should say,
Were not the other in the way !

TO MY SISTER-IN-LAW—SENDING ME A FINE DUCK

As I to-night began to tuck,
Into some dishes rare ;
I said what is there like a duck,
Why nothing, I declare !

O ! how can words my thanks express,
All envy my good luck ;
With each tit morsel how I bless,
The donor of that duck !

TO MY NIECE'S INVITATION TO TEA, TO MEET
GENERAL AND MRS. RICHE

When Riches, muffins, cake, and tea,
For us so kindly wait ;
What awful muffins we should be,
If failing you, my Kate,

We did not promptly come to time,
And crumptious crumpets eat ;
And tell how Rich-ly (all in rhyme)
We both enjoyed the treat !

TOM ELLIS, A COMMON LABOURER—BUT A NOBLE MAN
—ACCIDENTALLY SHOT AND SEVERELY WOUNDED
BY KEEPER WHEN OUT SHOOTING WITH ME

DEEP in my pocket, safe and sound,
Tom's grateful sentiments I found;
His thoughts so rustic and unique
Were such as he would write and speak.
Tom's not a man of erudition,
But quite abreast of his position;
Altho' he has not learnt to spell,
He always does his duty well!
And this is far away the better,
Than any well-spelt polished letter;
Than Thomas Ellis no one can,
Produce a truer, braver man.
Him, dear old fellow, I admire,
He riddled with the Keeper's fire,
And tried to free from fault and blame,
The Keeper agonized with shame!
Though but a labourer he be,
On him is stamped nobility!
Had he a soldier served the Queen,
Then Tom a Hero would have been,
Of England's sons the first and best,
With valour's cross upon his breast;
Well done, old fellow, all will say,
When brave old Tom has passed away.

TO MISS FLORA —, WHOSE SISTERS HAD PRE-
VIOUSLY LEFT LYNCHMERE

IT will afford your sisters sweet,
Unbounded satisfaction ;
To learn that you have been discreet,
Despite a great attraction !

I've watched your every glance and wink,
Though fond you are of men ;
I'd trust you anywhere, I think,
With three-score years and ten !

Old fogies though worn out and stale,
As guests they do amuse ;
In houses with no other male
From whom to pick and choose !

Altho' no spooney signs you've made,
I'm sure one afternoon,
As we together croquet played,
You thought me then a spoon !

I will not more on croquet croak,
A croquet dab I ain't ;
But if my strokes your ire provoke,
You can't be quite a saint !

I know at croquet, sad to say,
We fought ('twas only sham),
At other times when games we play,
We gamble like the lamb !

But, Flora, do—in weal and woe—
At croquet if you can,
Select a *partner*, not a foe,
And choose a nice young man !

And should again your sisters stray
From you, their Flora fair,
In strictest confidence they may
Consign you to my care!

August 10, 1893.

TO MY SISTER, ON THE OCCASION OF HER SON-IN-LAW, MAJOR BOWERS, SUCCEEDING TO THE COMMAND OF THE 5TH DRAGOON GUARDS

There was some idea he had not the qualifying service.

HURRAH, at last 'tis cracked—the nut,
Out comes the “kernel” strong!
Prophets of ill away they cut,
Confess themselves quite wrong!

Your future now from doubts is free,
Your path is strewn with flowers;
Each step you take you'll proudly see
A Colonel in the Bowers!

TO MR. RYDER, WHO USED TO ALLOW US THE USE
OF HIS SITTING-ROOM AT THE STRATHPEFFER
HOTEL

SAD thoughts before the peep of morn,
When most men were asleep,
Coursed through my heart, so lone and torn,
I scarce could help to weep!

I know that you must leave to-day,
To us a friend indeed,
In many a kind and thoughtful way,
Which those in sickness need!

We're apt when illness is our doom,
At roughing it to fret :
The comfort of your sitting-room,
We never shall forget !
We pray that every earthly bliss,
With you and yours may dwell ;
Accept, dear friend, if not amiss,
Our grateful thanks,—farewell !

TO THE REV. J. ELLISON, ON RETURNING HIS
REPORT OF THE CONGRESS ON ESCHATOLOGY

YOUR book I shall again require,
Replete with information ;
The arguments I most admire,
Refer to our damnation !
In problems dark of punishments,
Which waken thoughts infernal ;
From which the troubled heart dissents,
I trace a hope eternal.
With Pusey and with Farrar's view,
To differ I am loth ;
I own I go, 'tis very true,
A step beyond them both !
Those writers once so fiercely fought,
Denounced each other's schism ;
But now I read, they just stop short
Of Universalism.
If these divines can reconcile,
Their strife, as each declares ;
Then why poor me should you revile,
Whose faith is nearly theirs.

That ghastly Eschatology,
I learnt in days of youth,
No longer taints Theology,
Or bars the way to truth !

And whilst antinomies exist,
As wide as Pole from Pole,
Those dogmas subtle I resist
Which war against the soul.

E'en great Archbishop Tait shrank back,
From pains, which I ignore,
Which disembodied spirits rack,
When time shall be no more.

Relief unspeakable, I find,
A heartfelt consolation ;
When conscience whispers, 'tis designed,
That *all* shall win salvation !

Our sins I know will find us out,
And bring their retribution ;
But pangs so bitter who can doubt
Shall end in "Restitution."

And if my creed, you godlike man,
To Heresy inclines,
Then solve the riddle, none else can,
Of all our best divines !

If I, a soldier, can't embrace,
Each orthodox decree ;
I'll strive by action to efface,
My incapacity !

"Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,"
Thunders from Heaven above ;
A voice re-echoes, sinner pray,
And trust the God of love !

If we in thought, in word, and deed,
Shall yearn to do our best ;
I humbly hope, no more we need,
But leave to God the rest !

FURTHER REFLECTIONS ON ESCHATOLOGY

AND if "aionious" is applied
To things that long ago passed by,
Such meanings justly are denied,
Which represent eternity.

It is maintained, so scholars say,
That texts in process of translation,
Have terms acquired which now convey,
An incorrect interpretation !

If Saint Augustine now could speak,
'Tis certain he would fain confess,
That little did he know of Greek :
A want that caused him much distress !

Whilst eschatology he favoured,
Of endless pains he felt a doubt,
And thus perplexed he often wavered,
A grievous state for saint devout !

Such frightful penalties, I own,
As everlasting punishments,
At thoughts of which I long did groan,
In my old age my soul resents !

That doctrine Newman must have spurned,
For he declared the Hell-fire scheme,
By which poor souls for ever burned,
Made multitudes of men blaspheme !

With that one Creed, so "cardinal,"
I do with Romanists agree,
But with their others, one and all,
I have no sort of sympathy!

And now I hold with Origen,
That in this world, the most depraved,
The unreclaimed, the worst of men,
Shall by God's grace at last be saved!

But in "the intermediate state,"
All mortals who have done amiss,
Till purified by "stripes" shall wait
Outside the realms of heavenly bliss!

For centuries this hopeful view
By holy men was not condemned;
If many a heart still feels it true,
Why should this doctrine be contemned?

Each time the anxious mind reflects,
On this mysterious awful theme;
As shown by sundry Scripture texts,
Obscurer the solutions seem!

To me the question does recur,
As on some ghastly words I dwell;
Did not the writers plainly err,
In meanings they attached to Hell?

Rebellious thoughts we can't control,
Nor on a God of love depend,
If *forced* to own that *any* soul,
Should suffer tortures without end!

At Ephesus, Chalcedon, Nice,
Constantinople, Councils four,
Origen held his faith in peace,
And he was followed more and more.

At least to him no angry signs,
Of opposition then were shown ;
Altho' he faced profound divines,
And his opinions were well known !

And in those Councils, I believe,
Were Christians who did not deny,
The views on which, as I conceive,
Vast numbers still in heart rely !

As " Universalist " he led,
That band of hope, a noble band,
The closer in their steps we tread,
The firmer we at last shall stand !

Is not redemption incomplete,
If (purchased at a priceless cost)
One soul is found at last unmeet
For Heaven—and is for ever lost ?

I may be wrong, my puny mind,
With never ceasing scrutiny,
May utterly have failed to find
A key to this dark mystery !

Whilst pondering on our future lot,
And whilst for all a hope I claim,
I trust as soldier I am not,
Incurring any fatal blame.

Let every searcher after truth,
Apply to self this faultless test,
(When past the frivolous days of youth)
Have I essayed to do my best ?

For problems deep he need not fight,
Even if doubts should not abate ;
Hold fast he should what he *feels* right,
To his Redeemer leave his fate !

TO COLONEL —, ON THE SUCCESS OF HIS SON
FRED ERNEST AT THE SANDHURST COMPETITIVE
EXAMINATION FOR THE ARMY

I'VE lately heard the joyful news,
That "Fred" has done the Sandhurst trick;
I'm sure you will not now refuse
To christen him a downright brick.

The crammers must have crammed him well,
And crammed him to the very brim;
For those who failed? Oh, what a sell!
What would they give to be like him?

This triumph on the part of "Fred,"
Is "Earnest" of renewed success,
He must be clever and well read,
And like his "dad" I shrewdly guess!

"Exams" like these, in my hot youth,
Would not I know have suited *me*,
And "Clifton," if he spoke the truth,
Would also have been "up a tree."

Such cramming I am sure retards
Some lads who yearn to serve the Queen—
That gallant Colonel of the Guards,
If tested, where would *he* have been?

Not in the place that "Fred" has won,
Of that I'd almost dare to swear!
Ploughed, plucked, unhappy, and undone,
He would have been, alas, nowhere!

The General of the Bengal Horse
Would surely have been also lost,
Another victim—spun of course
At poor old England's heavy cost!

Tell "Fred," I stoutly now maintain,
If he goes on as he's begun,
He'll show the Gascoigne blood and brain,
In him has found a worthy son!
And if he bravely keeps within,
The path he has so nobly trod,
He'll be an honour to *his* kin,
His kith, his country, and his God!
On, Freddy, on to fortune, fame,
Thy father's pride, thy mother's joy;
And with each step, take higher aim,
Success be thine, my brilliant boy!

40, *St. George's Road*, January 17, 1891.

AMY'S LAMENT ON THE DEATH OF HER FAVOURITE
DOG "REX"

WHAT pang could in this world of love,
My soul more sorely vex;
It broke my heart, that sudden blow,
Which struck down dear old Rex!
But sleep on now, my faithful friend,
'Tis well, indeed, with thee;
From first thou wast, and to the end,
As true as gold to me!
A watchful guard in all my ways,
You asked no greater treat,
Than spend with me your nights and days,
Close cuddled at my feet;
Though deaf and blind, your loss I mourn,
Your worth I can't forget;
But still 'tis best that you have gone,
Unto the dogs, my pet!

Your work is done, at rest thou art,
I must not then repine ;
And when I die, may my sad heart,
Be innocent as thine !

In dogs immortal few believe,
And faith that creed rejects ;
I only say, I can't conceive
A heaven without a Rex !

Who knows that in a future state,
We may not meet again ;
In this fond hope, I'll calmly wait,
And staunch my canine pain.

Doggies may come, doggies may go,
From pets we all must sever ;
But darling Rex, alas ! I know,
West Hay has left for ever !

West Hay, August 21, 1892.

TO MISS CUBITT, ON OUR LEAVING LYNCHMERE,
HASLEMERE

August 11, 1893.

WHILST on thy scenes, Lynchmere, I dwell,
In fairy-land I seem ;
I feel my heart with rapture swell,
I start as from a dream !

I'd like to lynch the Lynchmere wretch,
Who leaves without a tear ;
I'd like the fellow's neck to stretch,
Who loves not Haslemere.

The "Blackdown" picnics—who can tell,
What fun they do afford,
With Isabella, Flora, Nell,
All round the festive board.

Miss Cubitt too, and my dear wife,
Gave sunshine to the scene;
Oh, mirth and frolic there were rife,
And appetites were keen!

I should have added dear Miss Rotch,
Companion, oh, so rare!
So bright, so cheery, and so Scotch,
But then she was not there!

And so we soon devoured the ham!
The apples, scones, and brawn;
And when we could no further cram,
We strolled about the lawn.

Through forests some delight to roam,
To Cockneys such a treat,
But by the time they reach their home,
They pity their poor feet!

But this is but a passing woe,
We very soon forget:
A rag tied round the tender toe,
Will heal it, if kept wet.

But some prefer the carriage-drive,
And I was one I own,
But coachee smart should not contrive,
To bump against a stone!¹

But these are trifles light as air,
Mere shadows they appear;
And all my outings I would share,
With friends near Haslemere.

¹ Which he did.

But earthly joys must have an end,
Miss Cubitt, we must part :
How can we say good-bye, dear friend,
Without an aching heart ?
Farewell, Lynchmere, again farewell,
Wherever we may be,
Our hearts enchained by thy sweet spell,
Will ever turn to thee.
We plead to come again next year,
If you don't mind, Miss Cubitt ;
So if inclined to ask us, dear,
Don't hesitate, but do it.

TO MY SISTER-IN-LAW AT CHESFIELD, IN DEFENCE
OF THE TWINS, ACCUSED OF BEING CHANGE-
ABLE IN PLANS AND MIND

A WILKINSON, his purpose change ?
It is a pure invention ;
I never stray beyond the range,
Of my announced intention.
But always something just steps in,
To thwart my firm desire ;
And fates adverse against my Twin
As cruelly conspire !
Events of which one never dreams,
How oft they intervene ;
Confounding all our well-laid schemes,
Which we had not foreseen !
When I resolve in my great mind,
To Chesfield I will go,
Down, down there comes, I sometimes find,
A storm of rain or snow.

When Johnson has conceived a plan,
To come and stay with me ;
You howl and say—you naughty man,
It is unkind of thee.

Don't leave me now, for Katie dear,
Next week will say ta-ta,
To all at Fryth, and will come here
To join her god-papa.¹

How happy, Carrie, you will feel,
When you have fairly caught her ;
For she is such a slippery eel,
Her uncle's own god-daughter.

But since our blood within her flows,
She might adopt our dodge ;
And change her mind, and go—who knows,
Well ! not to Chesfield Lodge.

These changes are to you a source,
Of irritating bother ;
A man should stick to one straight course,
Not flit from one to t'other.

In this uncertain world, 'tis known,
There must be fluctuations,
Affecting not the Twins alone,
But all created nations !

So when our plans, do what we can,
With pledges do not fit,
You'll know the cause, 'tis not the man,
But Providence who does it !

To you, half French, I need not tell
The proverb—man proposes ;
But if his plan does not work well,
God otherwise disposes !

¹ Johnson, my twin-brother.

I'm sure you, Carrie, never saw,
 (I hope I'm not offending)
Two soldiers, brothers-(both)-in-law,
 So staunch, and so unbending !
So with the year that now begins,
 If you would shun damnation ;
Accord the Twins, despite their sins,
 A sister's admiration.

July 1892.

TO MRS. D——, ACKNOWLEDGING THE RECEIPT BY
HANDS OF HER ETON BOY OF A CUP AND SAUCER,
PLATE, BOX OF MATCHES, SWEETS, SNAKE, AND
FUNNY BOOK OF JEROME—ALL TAKEN FROM A
CHRISTMAS TREE

WHEN I awoke this morn I thought,
 With gratitude and joy,
Of all those pretty presents brought,
 By your smart Eton boy !

I thought of snakes within the grass,
 That bode all sorts of ill ;
From snakes like this—naught comes to pass,
 The danger's really nil.

And then I thought of box so small,
 A matchless Christmas treat,
But 'stead of shedding light on all,
 'Twas full of goodies sweet !

I thought of cup, and Jerome's book,
 Of plate—and saucer too—
And then I gave a saucy look,
 And thought, dear friend, of you !

If spared next year how very nice,
How jolly it will be,
If I may have another slice,
From off your Christmas tree !

TO THE DONOR OF A NUT-PICKER

YOU always are, dear, nuts to me,
I never tell a cracker ;
If any girl should disagree,
I'd like so much to smack her.

The inside of a walnut old,
Perchance requires a picker ;
Without one I have oft been sold,
If inside be a sticker !

No walnut now, excuse the joke,
Can ever me defy,
With picker's point I give a poke,
And out the entrails fly.

TO A SOLDIER ARTIST STRUGGLING BY THE HELP
OF HIS PENCIL TO SAVE HIS FAMILY FROM RUIN

MAY this ill-fated soldier find,
Though now by cruel trials racked ;
The ways and means and work combined,
To keep his hearth and home intact !

Such patience and artistic skill,
His future path must surely bless ;
With pencil armed, he bravely will
Attain, ere long, complete success !

Himself a picture, staunch and true,
To all of us he does attest,
Just what a gallant soul can do,
However by this world oppressed.
He may have been perhaps to blame,
He may have been too apt to swerve;
Ah! which of us, I ask with shame,
Does not as hard a fate deserve?
To "mend" was never yet too late,
With this wise maxim I accord;
For fortune comes to all who wait,
And patience reaps its rich reward.

May 19, 1898.

VERSES ON A HUNTING SKETCH

WHILST gazing on this maddening scene,
Wildly I feel each pulse rebound,
What I am now, what I have been,
Recalls my noble horse and hound!
O! for an hour of such a run,
With every thrilling pleasure fraught;
But, ah! my course is well-nigh done,
Why harbour longings after sport?

TO MRS. PICKERING, WRITTEN IN HER VISITORS
BOOK ON LEAVING BORROWSTONE AND BRIGHT-
WELL

How can we tear ourselves away,
From such a lovely scene?
'Tis past the range of words to say,
How happy we have been!

Ah! "Borrowstone," each stone can tell,
 What we in parting feel!
 Good-bye, sweet spot—and fare—thee—well,
 Kincardine and O'Neil!

If I were free to pick and choose,
 The home where I would be,
 For thee the world I would refuse,
 Thou bonny Banks of Dee!

TO THE SAME, LEAVING BRIGHTWELL

September 22, 1893.

O! LUCKY man, supremely blest,
 Again warm welcome have I found,
 As Brightwell's favoured happy guest,
 With Brightwell's brightness all around.

TO CHARLES G—, THE HIGHLANDER, PRESENTING
 HIM WITH A PAIR OF DUMB-BELLS, WITH A VIEW
 OF EXPANDING HIS MANLY FRAME

IN some men's minds suspicion dwells,
 And you might think it rum;
 If having sent my promised bells,
 I—like those bells—were dumb.

I therefore write a line to say,
 You now can fairly ring,
 The changes on those bells each day,
 For *you*—the very thing!

Although so dumb, those bells will tell,
Of shoulders, which of late,
Were loose and round—and drooped as well,
But now are smart and straight!

If used aright—no longer slack,
Your frame transformed will be;
With shoulders square, and head thrown back,
Adonis, just like me!

And belles, not dumb, but all aflame,
Will think it not amiss,
If, when within their reach you came,
You gave to each a kiss!

For belles do love the manly form,
Of Highlanders erect;
And salutations sweet and warm,
They somehow all expect!

O! dumb-bell'd Charlie, so upright,
You'll fetch the Seaforth pals:
Your splendid figure will excite,
The hearts of all the gals!

By steady practice with dumb-bells,
All rivals you'll efface;
And hold amongst gymnastic swells,
The first and foremost place!

October 10, 1893.

IN REPLY TO AN APPEAL OF A GUARDSMAN'S
DAUGHTER, IN BEHALF OF THE GUARDSMEN'S
CAMP AT PIRBRIGHT

I SEND my wee, my little mite,
"Might"ier it "might" be!
But if the Guards re"gard" what's right,
They'd ask no help from me!
The Guards, no doubt, know how to fight,
For England, Home, and Beauty;
But when they shut their pockets tight,
They quite forget their duty!
A work like this, to my small mind,
(I may be sentimental,)
To Guards alone should be confined,
Be strictly Regimental!
Pirbright may be both wild and dreary,
Its dulness be intense;
Let Guardsmen make it bright and cheery,
But not at my expense.
However, 'tis not in my heart,
To turn away from you,
So half-a-"sov" I set apart,
For this your Pirbright "do."

April 22, 1891.

TO MRS. M—, ON STARTING FOR OAK GROVE

WE hope to see, if all goes well,
"Oak Grove" in all its charms:
And just before the dinner-bell,
To rush into your arms!

We catch the train at Waterloo,
'Tween half-past four and five,
And shall—at least, we ought to do—
At half-past six arrive.

TO MRS. DUNN, ASKING HER TO SUBSCRIBE TO A
CHURCH

If ever I dunned you before,
You never were *done* all the same!
Yet Dunn you must be evermore,
For how can you alter your name?

TO A VERY TALL YOUNG LADY

No wonder you are good, dear love,
For from this mortal stage,
You soar much nearer Heaven above,
Than most girls of your age!

TO MY SISTER-IN-LAW AT CHESFIELD

THERE'S something so jolly and pleasant,
To find on your day-bill of fare,
From Chesfield, a cocky young pheasant,
As well as a beautiful hare!

TO MY SISTER-IN-LAW "DIE," IN REPLY TO HER
REQUEST FOR THE PROMISE OF MY VOTES FOR
A CANDIDATE AT THE NEXT ELECTION OF ROYAL
BATH SCHOOL

ALTHO' I am inclined to "Die,"
I yet would rather longer live;
And whilst I have a kick—I'll try,
To all your wants an answer give.

But now perplexities ensue,
Which are—without regard to dying—
Profoundly grave, and might lead you,
To e'en encourage me in lying.

For years ago I sternly swore,
That whilst I held official sway,
I would not pledge my votes before,
The very last Election day!

And to this promise I have stuck,
Through thick, my dearest Die, and thin;
And you, who always wish me luck,
Would hardly care to see me sin!

To Wolseley yesterday I wrote,
And he, no doubt, my letter cursed,
For when he pleaded for my vote,
I said I'd see him jiggered first!

So when a favour I deny,
To Lord of such unrivalled fame;
You'll understand the reason why,
I treat you, darling, just the same!

TO MISS —, THE DONOR OF A SNIPE

THRICE welcome snipe, that wings its way,
Directed by your own sweet will ;
Excepting thanks, there's naught to pay,
Despite a rather longish bill !

We shared it, and we both decided,
By cooky it was nicely done ;
In death, though halved, 'twas not divided,
For wife and I are only one !

TO AN OLD BROTHER OFFICER ASKING FOR A BED

I, MAUNSELL, never, never lie,
Upon my own spare bed :
So you on it may lie—O! fie,
And lie for me instead !

And Friday, Maunsell, by the bye,
Is now the date you name ;
A rare good day on which to lie,
To me 'tis all the same.

TO THE REV. DOUGLAS ELLISON, WHO HAD BEEN
TRAVELLING ON A TROLLEY AND RUN INTO BY A
TRAIN AT THE CAPE

MY Douglas dear, with fondest love,
By all the blessed powers above,
I ask what could exceed the folly,
Of running bang against a trolley,

With engine steaming at full speed,
It must have been a crash indeed.
At thought of it, I puff and blow,
Just like the engine on the go:
The reckless brute who caused the crash,
I hope he suffered in the smash!
When on the "line" e'en Parsons "rail,"
If squashed at all, in head or tail!
Of course, to jump from that 'ere trolley,
Involved a feat afar from jolly;
As you escaped intact, you said,
You must have lit upon your head,
The densest part in your whole body,
The spot to fall on from a trolley!
Travelling in the path of duty,
'Tis well you did not mar your beauty!
A Curate with a battered face,
On any church would bring disgrace;
Oh! what a guy you would have looked,
And how your goose you would have cooked;
With broken nose, or eye knocked out,
Your congregation all would shout,
Oh! there's the cove that was so sorry,
When dashing headlong from a trolley!
The maidens too, like Sal and Polly,
Would each denounce that hateful trolley;
For girls both fair, and blacky—moor,
The handsome Douglas all adore;
How oft their panting hearts intone,
Why *do* such darlings live alone?
It is not good for them, or us,
Celibacy we hate—and cuss!
It is enough to wring one's withers,
To see one's trap reduced to smithers;
To die ignobly on a trolley,

Would be a fate most melancholy!
Still more unclerical to pitch,
His Reverence in a slimy ditch :
It might not signify to niggers,
Or those they call the gold-mine diggers,
But 'tis a thought most sinister,
That Douglas, you, our Minister,
Whose lot it is to cure the soul,
And fit it for its heavenly goal :
To see you sprawling in the dust—
That dust to which you say we must,
Some day return—it is appalling !
I fancy I can hear you bawling—
Oh! had I but refused to roam,
From friends I dearly love at home,
I should not now lie at death's door,
All bruised and scratched and very sore ;
But p'r'aps this is not what you feel,
And I your thoughts do not reveal ;
For if one Black you should convert,
Before your steps again revert,
To dear old England, Home, and Beauty,
You'll feel that you have done your duty ;
Your work, you'll say, is not in vain,
If one immortal soul you gain ;
For he who winneth souls is wise,
At least, the "wise-man" so implies.
I do not scorn your Africander,
So pray suppress your rising dander ;
I only feel what we have lost ;
I only know the precious cost,
We have incurred by your devotion,
To niggers black beyond the ocean ;
Our bowels yearn on you, old chap,
For others we don't care a rap ;

The curates both before and since
(’Tis well the truth I should not mince)
Have not supplied your place at all,
(Confound those Natives at Natal);
’Tis they who by their dusky spell,
Seduced the Priest we love so well:
Oh! idol of St. Gabriel’s Church,
Why did you leave us in the lurch?
Our hearts are filled with one sad strain,
We ne’er shall see your like again!

AN APPEAL IN BEHALF OF AN OLD SWEEPER

MID Gabriel’s Church and Warwick Square,
An old man may be seen;
Who in all weather, foul and fair,
Will keep your “pathway” clean!
No worthier soul in life’s long way,
Your “path” has crossed, I think;
Then give him something more, I pray,
Than just a kindly wink!
His antecedents I know well,
They make the best men blush:
But now his “pathway,” sad to tell,
Lies through the mud and slush!
He was a painter once, by trade,
And painted to his cost,
For in his paint the seeds were laid,
By which his health was lost!
A paralyzed old man, ’tis strange,
That this should be the doom,
Of painters oft, who thus exchange,
Their brush for sweeper’s broom!

To men like thee, the workhouse seems
A refuge of disgrace ;
A prison grim, with dismal gleams,
And not a resting-place !

And though his sands are ebbing fast,
And sight is growing dim,
Sweep on he will while life shall last,
For home is sweet to him !

The workhouse *I* would never blame,
Nor all its useful laws ;
Old men I honour all the same,
Who "work" and shun its doors !

The tenderest heart will sometimes vent
A "sweeping" condemnation,
On sweepers whose last days are spent,
In struggling with starvation !

But whilst I would this old man keep,
From workhouse (is it wrong ?),
From every "crossing" I would sweep,
The sweepers hale and strong !

Our "soles" he saves, both young and old,
Who cross his well-swept street ;
For doctors say the deadly cold,
Is due to dampish feet !

Sweep on, sweep on, thou good old man,
Kind friends, your pockets search ;
Spare him a copper if you can,
As you cross by to church !

TO LADY G——, WHO HAD SENT ME A SOVEREIGN
AS A PRESENT TO AN OLD CROSSING SWEEPER,
IN RESPONSE TO THE PRECEDING APPEAL

IN this old world was ever seen,
A kinder soul than lady G——,
May God with untold blessings keep her,
Devoutly prays the poor old sweeper.
Ah! lucky dog, ah, happy Harry,
With such a wife to meet and marry ;
The sweeper would no doubt have said,
Were he a poet born and bred!

TO MISS ——, A VICTIM TO INFLUENZA, AND IN
EXPLANATION OF MY INABILITY TO VISIT HER

OF all the ills I have to bear,
The heaviest it seems to me,
Is that which drives me to despair,
Forbids my keeping touch with thee !
The fact is, Influenza dread,
Once felled me with a sudden blow ;
And I was then so nearly dead,
That wifey ever since, I know,
Has fancied that I must be prone,
To that particular disease ;
And though her fears I do disown,
Her wishes I am bound to please !
As contact now with you, dear friend,
It is my duty to withstand,
To fill the gap, my love I send,
In lieu of shaking your dear hand !

Believe me, I would come to you,
But wife, by coat-tails, pulls me back ;
And says Miss —— has got the “Flu,”
Avoid her, don’t go near her track !

With patience drink your bitter cup,
At physic nasty don’t you frown ;
Altho’ not nice, ’twill cheer you up,
When you are limp and sadly down !

If I could just creep in by stealth,
Then you I would contrive to see :
But whilst you have no “Bill of Health,”
Wife keeps a sharp look-out on me.

I have myself but little qualms,
Would be your nurse, if quite correct ;
But heed I must my wife’s alarms,
Propriety, too, I must respect.

I’ll come when you are purged from ills,
And me will not contaminate ;
I’ll come when you have done with pills,
And bless your renovated state !

TO SIR JOHN WATSON, IN REPLY TO HIS REQUEST
THAT I WOULD GIVE MY VOTES TO MISS GRANT,
WHO IS A CANDIDATE FOR THE ROYAL SCHOOL

I agreed at first, but afterwards withdrew my consent.

PRAY take it for “granted,” my chum,
My votes I will give to Miss Grant,
And shall to all others be dumb,
Or else I shall tell them I can’t !

SECOND THOUGHTS

But as my word I rarely stake,
Will not this pledge of mine betoken,
That pie, whose crust the cookies make,
And which you know is often broken!

From vow so rash I really must
Implore your aid to set me free,
As Governor, who holds a trust,
Impartial I am bound to be!

If this decision bodes despair,
With all my soul I say—Oh! don't,
For I shall do what's right and fair,
Forget *you*, Johnny? no, I won't!

Forget a glorious man of war!
With V.C. on his noble breast!
Forget his *protégée*,—oh! lor!
A Watson sure can guess the rest!

The moon may change to greenish cheese,
The stars from skies levant;
The sun assume what form it please,
But I shall not forget Miss Grant!

TO MISS —, ON RETURNING *THE GOLDEN TREASURY OF SONG*, WHICH I HAD BORROWED WHEN SHE WAS OUT OF TOWN AND STAYING WITH HER AUNT AT HARROW

If you at home so seldom stop,
But in and out of Harrow pop,
And with your old but handsome aunt,
For ever love to gallivant,
You must not disappointment feel,
If for a time I dared to steal,

Your *Golden Treasury of Song*,
Which does, I think, to you belong!
At least, I bagged it from your shelf,
When none but I, my single self,
Was present in that vacant room,
Which, you away, filled me with gloom!
I vow that nothing else I took,
Excepting that same lyric book;
I might, indeed, have cribbed a lot,
But then I thought I'd better not,
As you so often know what's what,
And anything at once would spot,
And give it him uncommon hot!
Your vanity I would not puff,
But you are always up to snuff;
You would—a miss—be sure to miss,
A book with amorous songs like this,
Whose pages glow with scenes of bliss,
As they recall the first fond kiss!
Such spooney lines one does not see,
Except in such a Treasury!
Well! left alone, amid temptation,
I felt a thievish inclination,
For slavey kept no watchful glare
On me, as she skipped down the stair;
She trusted to my honour bright,
Like faithful servant she did right.
There was a something in her eye,
Which seemed distinctly to imply
To me, this warning she would give,
Please borrow, sir, and do not prig:
My mistress thinks that loans are fair,
But kleptomania she can't bear!

November 10, 1893.

TO HANDSOME HARRY —, ON HIS OBJECTING TO
MY WAXED MOUSTACHE, AND ON HIS LEAVING
FOR HIS NEW HOUSE IN QUEEN'S GATE

WHEN I was young, and fresh, and green,
By Nature's self adorned,
A waxed moustache I'd never seen,
All artifice I scorned!

But now, in my old age, one's hair,
('Tis really very sad)
Goes straggling here and straggling there,
It drives me nearly mad!

And when it overhangs my lips,
Although it does not hurt ;
It tickles so, my soup too, drips,
All down my snow-white shirt!

Without the wax, two graceful curls,
I've twisted for the day,
But soon, too soon, the hair unfurls,
And wildly breaks away!

I've worked them up with moistened thumb,
But then, 'twas only spittle ;
A nasty plan, but used by some,
To stop the constant tickle!

Some common gum I once applied—
I mean gum-arabic—
It turned to powder when it dried,
And then refused to stick!

Cosmetics, once, I thought to try,
Before I went to bed ;
When I awoke I was a guy,
My hair was flaming red!

Ah! if you could restore my youth,
I should not care two sticks,
For my moustache—not I, forsooth,
I'd spurn adhesive tricks!

If tidily you can control,
My shaggy upper lip;
Reveal the dodge, and by my soul,
I'll bless you for the tip!

'Tis very fine for men like you,
So handsome and so smart,
To tell an old 'un, it won't do,
I must not trust to art!

If my moustache would not rebel,
I'd take your good advice;
For what you say, I know right well,
Is always kind and nice!

My ingenuity, I say,
In every shape I've taxed;
But my moustache will not obey,
Unless it be well waxed!

But lest you should my art abuse,
And "waxen" wroth with me,
Henceforth, I will most strictly use,
But half the quantity!

A truce to mirth, another scene,
Awaits us—we must part,
With neighbours, who have ever been,
The joy of every heart!

All jokes hirsute would now offend,
For fondly would I dwell,
On days we spent with you, dear friend,
Oh! must we say—farewell?

Oh! Henry, pity our sad fate,
It may be gain to you,
But when you pass the Queen's own gate,
Oh! think of us—adieu!

To part with you and your sweet wife,
Will cost us many a sigh;
And darken all our future life:
Good-bye, dear friends, good-bye.

To watch your olive branches bright,
Around their mother's knee;
To us it was a lovely sight,
What must it be to thee?

Sometimes remember us, I pray,
St. Gabriel's days recall,
A soldier pleads, oh! hear my lay,
God bless you, one and all!

March 26, 1891.

TO MISS —

'Twas very good of you to send,
To me a sweet and loving ditty!
It savoured of yourself, dear friend,
'Twas racy, to the point, and witty!

I like your metre and your measure,
Your thoughts are genuine and true:
In fact, there is for me no pleasure,
Like that which emanates from you!

Your lines a special charm possess,
A charm unique—and all your own;
It takes an hour at least to guess,
Some words by which your views are shown!

So if your writing should involve,
A serious doubt or puzzle,
And if it take a deal to solve
Your caligraphic muddle!

You must remember that the treat,
Is then the more and more enhanced :
The longer I am at your feet,
The more and more I am entranced.

TO MRS. AND MISS —, ACKNOWLEDGING THEIR
HALF-GUINEA SUBSCRIPTION TO THE SOLDIERS'
DAUGHTERS' HOME

YOUR sympathy and kind support,
In all my works and begging ways,
Are interwoven and inwrought,
And cheer my fast-declining days.

As each half-guinea you shell out,
You'll yearly say, in language terse,
That General was most dear, no doubt,
But made big holes in our poor purse.

But though he cost us very dear,
So dear he was, in our hearts' core,
That we, bereft, shall wish each year,
That he was here to ask for more!

SUBSEQUENT THOUGHTS TO THE ABOVE

WITH my prophetic soul, I see,
That you a Cræsus will become,
And I foretell you will decree,
Some further help to my pet Home!

Your half-a-guinea dole will hide
Its poor diminished head—and then
It will, I know, be multiplied
By sovereigns five, or even ten!

December 24, 1898.

TO MISS —, ANOTHER DEAR NEIGHBOUR, ON THE
EVE OF HER DEPARTURE, FOR THE INSIDE OF A
WEEK, FROM HOME

FOR just “inside” a week, I hear,
That you “outside” must go away;
To my “inside” ’twill seem a year,
So don’t a moment longer stay!

It’s only for a week, no doubt,
But “inside” one, although it be,
’Twill turn a “weak” man inside out,
To live a week “outside” of thee!

Then warn your pals, beyond a week,
If they detain my friend and neighbour,
On them my vengeance I will wreak,
And then with language bad belabour!

Shall I be happy? No, I shan't,
 If you a week in mischief be;
 You might be safe with your old aunt,
 With no one else, except with me!
 Yes, this is what I "inwards" feel,
 When maidens staid are bent on larks;
 "Outwards" they seem demure, genteel,
 Till led astray by wild young sparks!
 Ah! times like these are oft misspent;
 The source, they are, of endless woes!
 These views are held by one old gent,
 Who figured once among the beaux!
 If you my lessons should forget,
 (I can't be always by your side,)
 Then perils will your path beset,
 And naught but grief will you betide!
 But you in vain I have not taught,
 'Tis cruel thus in doubts to prate;
 The staunch "good fight" you've bravely fought,
 And kept the road that's christened "*Straight*."
 Then good as gold come back, my dear;
 Your pranks confess—and frankly tell,
 E'en how in spirit I am near,
 And till we meet again—farewell.

March 14, 1898.

TO AUNTIE (NOT MINE), ON HAVING LEFT MY
 UMBRELLA AT HER HOUSE

To do without, enchanting aunt,
 (Not you, of course, I do not mean,)
 But my umbrella—that I can't,
 Though old and gamp-ish it may seem!

When it has ceased its shade to lend,
In your protection let it rest :
Till you can send it back, my friend,
'Tis only, dear, my second best !

For folk like you it is unfit,
That, I confess, is very true ;
But would that I were under it,
When it so snug is over you !

Retain it long as you have life,¹
You will not pawn it, that I know ;
A birthday present from—my wife,
About a hundred years ago !

I hope you won't sore umbrage take,
To lines that show a *shady* mind,
"Screen" me, I pray, excuses make,
To all my "'brella" faults be kind !

TO DICK HARVEY, ON PASSING HIS FINAL
EXAMINATION FOR THE NAVY

WELL done, my jolly little tar,
A middy now you soon will be :
The pride and joy of your mamma,
And all of those who plough the sea !

For you, within life's opening span,
Though but a boy, have done your duty ;
You are a treasure, little man,
An ocean's gem, a mother's beauty.

¹ She was eighty-six years.

Should I have haply gone aloft,
And you, perchance, have gone to sea,
With eyes celestial I shall oft,
Look down on you, a K.C.B.!

How Harvey in Howe's action fell,
Is blazoned in the Abbey's shrine,
Mid monuments which proudly tell
Of hero, statesman, and divine!

And when your brilliant course is run,
And all that's human in you dies,
Your deeds, by dauntless valour won,
Your Country will immortalize!

TO MY SISTER LIZZIE, AND ALLEN HER NURSE

January 1, 1896—New Year

RING in with peals the new-born year,
And ere the sounds are borne away,
Let us thank God, my sister dear,
That we are spared to see this day!

We both have been supremely blest,
With years unclouded and serene:
May this be far the happiest,
That you and I have ever seen!

May you throughout this Christmas tide,
A joyful, merry season spend;
And may good fortune long abide
With Allen, faithful nurse and friend

To us she has a lesson taught,
A precept beautiful and rare :
A nurse for *self* should have no thought,
Her mistress claiming all her care !

Whilst in life's journey you draw near,
The final scene, the mortal goal,
Discard all doubts—away with fear,
For Heaven awaits your deathless soul.

And should your summons mine precede,
Be ready with a sister's love
To give to me an angel's lead,
To everlasting realms above !

TO A LADY, WHO OBJECTED TO THE COMMITTEE
OF THE SOLDIERS' DAUGHTERS' HOME "RECOM-
MENDING" ANY CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION

To all elections you demur,
Which "recommend" the girls, I read :
But most electors much prefer
To follow our advice and lead !

Infallible I—no longer shine,
That fiction you at once stamped out,
But still, experience such as mine,
You will respect without a doubt !

Since our selections rarely fail,
I might perhaps with pride suggest,
The reason why our girls prevail ;
That voters feel we must know best !

My good, kind lady let me state,
(And this I know none can dispute.)
The claims of each young candidate,
We probe with searchings most minute.

And as electors do approve
Of us, who regulate selection,
I think, myself, I would remove
The rule of voting at Election.

I would to members of a Board,
Composed of veterans, sage and true,
Implicit confidence accord,
A faith which seems to me their due!

Though you be clever, and so keen,
(I speak to you with bated voice,)
You hardly can conceive, I ween,
The facts that influence our choice!

For instance, we a preference show,
To claims of each competing corps,
The one that helps us, which we know,
Has met with no success before!

Then not a few fine regiments,
Which should, I think, subscribe, but won't;
Whilst others with some good intents,
Incline to aid us—but they don't!

When corps like these refuse to lend,
A helping hand to us in need,
We can't forget, they ne'er befriend,
Or pay our Home the smallest heed!

And then we have to keep in mind,
'Tween Horse and Foot a due proportion,
To each, allotments are assigned,
With a conscientious caution!

If all these facts you closely scan,
You'll see we hold the balance true,
We are not perfect, I—frail man—
With deep respect bow—down to you!

TO THE AUTHOR OF "HER MARRIAGE VOW"

As late last night, absorbed, entranced, I sat,
My very soul on Cecil's fate on fire;
I said, an author who can write like that,
May well to never-dying fame aspire!

I, here, before the wide, wide world maintain,
That neither men, nor women weak, can now,
(Unless the wretch has read your book in vain)
E'er break, in thought or deed, the marriage vow.

TO MISS —, ON HER SENDING ME A CHRISTMAS
CARD, ILLUSTRATED WITH A LITTLE BOAT IN
FULL SAIL

If I were requested to note,
The Card I have prettiest found,
I'd point to your little snug Boat,
And sail with you all the world round.

Provided that my little wife,
Allowed me to scuttle away ;
If she refused, then on my life,
It would be my duty to stay !

The moment I noticed your Bark,
I felt in a nautical frame ;
I said to myself—What a lark,
If you were to harbour the same !

1890.

TO MY SWAFFHAM COUSIN MAUD

THE Wilkinson is yet unborn,
Who never to himself has sworn,
There is no place like Swaffham House !
If such a stupid ass there be,
Who does not straight with me agree,
He simply is ridiculous !

In youth, in manhood, and old age,
Each step we take upon Life's stage,
Reminds us—all things pass away ;
But Swaffham days, aye, each and all,
With grateful minds, we shall recall,
So long as memory holds its sway !

Oh ! Swaffham, though thy country be,¹
Without the charm of scenery,
The ugliest in all the earth,
I love thee still with all my heart ;
Like "Home sweet Home" to me thou art,
For thou didst give my mother birth.

¹ Cambridgeshire.

ON SEEING A CROWD OF OLD WOMEN ISSUING
FROM THE VESTRY DOOR. AFTER SOME LADIES
HAD BEEN READING TO THEM, IT OCCURRED TO
ME, THAT I MIGHT ALSO TRY AND AMUSE THEM

As women were thronging the vestry door,
And canvassing family bothers,
Said I to myself, Here's mischief in store,
For look at those jabbering mothers!

I asked an old croaker, one of the crowd,
Pray what is this clatter and chatter?
Some Ladies, she said, have been reading aloud,
And that is the whole of the matter!

And might I not give these Fossils a taste,
What hoary old soldiers can do—
My yarns would be moral, proper, and chaste,
Confined to a laugh, or boo-boo.

I wonder if they would be tickled in vain,
If I were to tell them the truth:
That lovers would come, enchant them again,
If they could recover their youth!

I'd give these old beldames the sort of discourse,
Which often they get from the Vicar;
Such goodie instruction, buttered with sauce,
No Parson could lay it on thicker.

At first I would tell them a humorous tale,
So playful, and spicy, and nice;
I then would admonish the giddy and frail,
Of frolics that generate vice!

I should not discuss the torments of Hell,
A mystery dark—and infernal :
But rather on rescue of souls, I should dwell,
Whose bliss is sublime and eternal.

And if in remorse, the hopeless should ask,
O ! what can we reprobates do !
Repent and confess, there's no harder task,
For those who have fallen like you.

To God, if you humbly pour out your heart,
He pardon and peace will bestow ;
Though scarlet thy sins—and stained as thou art,
As white shalt thou be as the snow.

With patient submission your trials bear,
For all that are mortal are vexed,
In this world of woe, but God will take care,
That you are repaid in the next.

When the battle is o'er and the victory won,
O ! then shall God's promise come true,
Tongue cannot tell when thy work is well done,
The joys that are waiting for you !

O ! mothers, then bravely endure to the end,
Let conscience each duty attest,
And God from on high this message will send,
Enter the realms prepared for the blest !

TO MY SISTER-IN-LAW "DIE," EXPRESSIVE OF MY
DISAPPOINTMENT AT BEING OUT WHEN SHE
CALLED

HE who returned to evening tea,
Was sadly shocked, and grieved to see,
Upon his table, "Die's" own card,
And he had missed her, O how hard!
And in his sorrow and despair,
He felt inclined to tear his hair.
He cursed all creatures here below,
Regarding each a deadly foe,
Who seemed to jeer, and quiz, and grin,
Because he had been taken in,
Deprived of happiness untold,
A wretch in fact, completely sold,
For what more cozy could there be,
Than share with "Die" delicious tea.
The bare idea excites his brain,
He could not choose but give the rein,
To bubbling thoughts all smoking hot,
Just like the tea within the pot.
It made his longing mouth to water,
At such a treat with "Die" and daughter;
And if that chance comes not again,
Then, then he's lost in hopeless pain.
In agony his life must pass,
Like one deserted by his lass!
Unless he should, perchance, recover,
And quite forget his recent bother,
For men revive in woes like this,
In other hearts find perfect bliss,
But he who now has drunk the cup
Of bitterness, will not hold up,

His poor dejected head again,
 Crushed down beneath this awful strain,
 Unless that sweet enchanting "Die,"
 And daughter have another shy,
 At 40 in St. George's Road,
 Where they will find a dainty load
 Of cakes and muffins—and some tea,
 That came from his own Company.
 But if no notice should be sent,
 And he is on his larks intent,
 Emma¹ then will let them wait;
 Should master be a little late,
 That faithful servant will feel sure,
 The silver spoons are all secure.

FROM FRANK GALL (MY COUSIN), ON MY BIRTHDAY

OH! Gemini, what is it that I hear?
 The Twins have both attained full sixty year.
 To live another sixty would be clever,
 But better still to live for ever!

REPLY BY ME

UPON the score of three-score years,
 A subject so appalling,
 To chaff the "Jos"² and "Ossy"² dears,
 Was "Frank"—but rather "Gall"-ing!

¹ The servant.

² Our nicknames.

REJOINDER BY FRANK GALL

A POET, dear to Britons, has defined,
How more the breezes are, than human beings kind.
I wished you, General, health and length of day,
A cruel pen repaid my dogg'rel lay.
Enough of this, our canine contest end,
Nor risk more jokes which might our kin offend;
As sound as ale, now don't presume to titter,
Though "Gall" my name, there's naught in me of bitter.

REPLY BY ME

A FAREWELL word let me repeat,
To tell you, Frank, before we part,
That nothing "bitter," cousin "sweet,"
Shall e'er embitter Osborn's heart;

In pledge thereof, let's quaff a cup,
And with the "bitter" find no fault,
So long as it comes bubbling up,
Between the flowing cup of malt.

And since you say you're sound as ale,
Oh! may the malt your life long cheer;
Without an ail, oh! may you hail,
The final drop into your *bier*!

TO THE TWO MISS — AND THEIR BROTHER, ON
PAYING THEM A DEBT OF THREEPENCE LONG
DUE

WITH deep respect, profound salāām,
I pay a debt long over-due;
A sum so small can do no harm,
And may not be much good to you!

I can't recall the full details,
Whose funds these coppers should increase,
With years the memory sadly fails,
So pray annex a coin apiece!

If for that plan you do not care,
Then why not toss up—heads or tails?
That verdict must be always fair,
Unlike my memory never fails!

TO MISS —, RETURNING THE BISHOP OF DURHAM'S
BOOK, AND REFERRING TO MY LOSS OF TEMPER
ON ONE OCCASION

I SEND you back your Book with thanks,
It is most edifying,
'Twill save me from all future pranks,
Of that there's no denying!

A man who follows that advice,
Will step by step secure,
A foothold 'gainst all forms of vice,
And strive for all things pure!

Whilst I adopt the Bishop's views,
In which all virtues blend:
I never shall again abuse,
As I did once, my friend.

My temper then was rather short,
To my abomination:
But now, I'm calm where once I fought
On any provocation.

TO MY SISTER LIZZIE, ASKING HER TO TAKE A FIVE-SHILLING TICKET FOR THE AMATEUR THEATRICALS GIVEN IN BEHALF OF THE ST. GABRIEL'S SCHOOLS, WHICH ARE IN DEBT

MY own beloved sister Liz,
I want to touch your heart:
All jokes avaunt—I never quiz,
Five bob and you must part.

If ruin should, alas! ensue,
From this great sacrifice,
Then bravely face the dismal view,
Count not the costly price!

For "Os" 'tis clearly right and fair,
Your pockets you should drain,
'Tis only once, and I'll take care,
It shan't occur again!

To feel that you have been a tool,
Whereby you have set free,
The debt that plagued the Parish School,
Will be a joy to thee!

And while St. Gabriel's holds its own,
No time shall ever rob,
The memory of your gift, as shown,
In your five-shilling bob.

And when the boys and lasses too,
Secure a situation,
They'll say 'tis mainly due to you,
Who helped their education!

For when our Funds were running dry,
And we got up a Play,
You took two tickets (with a sigh),
And hoped the Piece would pay!

P.S.—I did not really first intend,
To bore you with a Rhyme:
Your aid I thought, you need not lend,
I'll let you off this time!

But when four hundred tickets sold,
The thought crossed through my mind,
To leave my sister in the cold,
Would not be nice nor kind.

TO HARRY, THANKING HIM FOR BECOMING A SUB-
SCRIBER TO THE SOLDIERS' DAUGHTERS' HOME

I THOUGHT I should not have to tarry,
To get your answer, all so kind;
For sure I felt that you, dear Harry,
To back me up would be inclined!

I well remember, by your side,
There sits a sweet and loving wife,
Who once "was such a happy bride"
And now the joy of your old life!

She knowing what is best for you,
(Your love for girls she don't upbraid)
Says, Harry, this you ought to do,
The Soldiers' Daughters' Home to aid!

To all good works with heart and hand,
Assistance she delights to lend;
This you and I both understand,
For am I not her oldest friend?

This is a grand propitious day,
God bless you, Harry, and your queen,
Your goodness shall ne'er fade away,
But for all time keep fresh, and green!

IN DEFENCE OF VICARS WOOD, THE STATIONER,
WHO WAS CONSIDERED DILATORY IN HIS WORK

DELAYS in shops must sometimes be:
With Vicars *Wood*—it *would* be so;
For "Stationer" implies, you see,
A man in whom there is no go!

REFERRING TO MY NEPHEWS, ARTHUR AND EDMUND;
THE LATTER, THE YOUNGER, CUTTING OUT HIS
ELDER BROTHER

O WHAT does Arthur say to this,
I bid you now enquire:
To see his Brother in such bliss,
And he a lonely squire!

Why don't he go—and do the same,
Whilst in the prime of life,
And save himself from further blame,
By wedding sharp a wife?

TO —

A WISE phrenologist last night
Essayed a maiden's head to test,
Her mental power he found all right,
With all the talents men love best!

And when he praised the fair one's brain,
Each lady as she went to bed
Retained a hope, he'd come again,
And then examine her own head.

He wanted much to test my noddle,
But I politely told him—nay,
The fact is this—I deem it twaddle,
And so I scuttled fast away!

By rummaging my brains about,
If science such as his be true,
He there and then might find me out,
Reveal the naughty things I do.

Imperial Hotel, Bournemouth, March 1892.

TO MY NIECE (WHO HAD BEEN ILL), ON THE EVE
OF OUR DEPARTURE FROM WEST HAY

My Amy, dear before we leave
I fain would tell you face to face,
That more than ever I believe
No Home could beat this lovely place.

My spirit has been near to you,
My body, too, to you had fled,
But then, I thought 'twould scarcely do,
As you lay racked on your sick bed.

That you are safely on the mend,
I, from my inmost soul, rejoice:
This loving message now I send,
(It is your fond old uncle's voice)

That God to you may soon restore
That gem, beyond all earthly wealth,
That He may give you back once more
That priceless blessing—perfect health.

West Hay, October 1, 1898.

REGARDING A FUR COAT

OF coat fur-lined from top to toe
I am the proud possessor :
It was restored three months ago
By Truefitt, the hairdresser !

As on bald heads, he does contrive
By secrets most remote,
To bring back hair—why not revive
My own moth-eaten coat !

That Truefitt should our ringlets crop,
Is true—a fitting act :
But line a coat? well! as a fact
'Twas bought at Truefitt's shop !

So he, at once, his good self pledged
To slay that wretched moth,
Which had in my fur coat been fledged
To my disgust—and wrath—

And soon was seen in each bald patch
There grew—and this I swear
By Truefitt's skill, a splendid thatch
Of fine luxuriant hair !

In my new coat with fur all lined
I swagger day by day—
I had no fault with it to find
Until I came to pay.

To have your cake, and eat it too,
This is a proverb still,
But moths don't reckon what they do,
As they don't pay the bill.

TO MRS. LAING, IN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SOME MINCE
PIES, AND REFERRING TO THEIR INGREDIENTS,
CONSISTING OF APPLES, CURRANTS, SUET, CITRON,
LEMON, ORANGE PEEL, SUGAR, TONGUE, RAISINS,
NUTMEG, AND BRANDY

WITHOUT a qualm, without a wince,
I say that friendship's ties,
And mind, my words I do not *mince*,
Do generate in Pies!

For well, 'tis known, to reach the heart,
The fact is rather funny;
You stuff a man with Pie or Tart,
That titivates his stummy.

And here I think it right and meet,
When dealing with "Mince Pie,"
To own I dearly love the treat,
In which such goodies lie!

'Tis "currently" and often said,
Of currants there's a lot,
In Pies—but whether black or red,
Deponent sayeth not!

Concurrent with the "currants dry,"
And here I'm in a fix,
Oh! tell me "plaise" the "raison" why
The plums and currants mix?

Another factor in the Pie,
Omit it, and you'll rue it,
For cookies say 'tis all my eye,
A mince without the suet!

A cook, if "spicey" and if chaste,
Would "grate" her nutmeg "small,"
And thus would grate-i-fy the taste,
Of Mince Pie eaters all!

And then, there sits—the citron peel,
A most delicious spice:
Which gives you a CITRONIC feel,
And nothing is so nice!

Since writing this I have been told,
That citron is no SPICE:
Sus-spice-ous this—but you will hold,
Me innocent of vice!

Then a lemon cut in slices,
Without the lemon-ade:
This will AID you, with your spices,
If straight in strata laid!

A tip of sound, though silent tongue,
(It speaketh for itself)
Is liked by all, the old and young,
Above e'en Pies or Pelf!

The sugar must be laid on thick,
I know not if 'tis *candied*:
But *candid*-ly, I know the trick,
That Pies are always *Brandied*!

The orange is the only fruit,
That I have now to trace:
O! range it so, that it may suit,
In its orangic place.

Thus far I had your Mince Pies scanned,
But quite forgot the GINGER:
A man cook would have been unman-ned,
If cookie, 'twould unhinge her!

And last I pluck from Apple Tree,
The apple of my eye :
The *apple* which so fetches me,
In Mrs. Laing's Mince Pie!

Ingredients all of your Mince Pies,
I've shown you how to treat them,
And now the duty on me lies,
To show you how to eat 'em!

If you should ask the time I pen,
These inspirations rare ;
I answer 'tis exactly when,
My toilette I prepare!

Just when I am about to bathe,
To give myself a scrub :
One foot I have (not) in the grave,
Because 'tis in my Tub!

1891.

TO MY NIECE, REQUESTING HER TO WRITE AND TELL
HER CLERGYMAN BROTHER "GAMMIE" WHAT HE
HAD MISSED IN FAILING TO COME AND DINE WITH
US

TELL your "Gammie" without Gammon,
That he would have had, of course,
Turkey, sausage, cod, or salmon,
With some shrimp, or oyster sauce!

Then a pudding nice and jammy,
Sweets in ev'ry vacant place ;
Such a tucking in for Gammie,
After he had said his grace!

SHOWING HOW THE NUPTIAL TIE UNITED MYSELF
AND MY NEPHEW CHARLEY, ON HIS WEDDING DAY

A TIE unites us, bright and gay,
It cost me half-a-crown :
I bought it for your Bridal day,
And paid the money down!

TO THE DONOR OF SOME NEW-LAID EGGS

I've brooded o'er your kind donation,
And thought of you so many times ;
And after patient incubation,
Have hatched these rather hen-pecked rhymes!

A chicken-hearted man might say,
Egged on by some ovated joke ;
Though fowl might be the germ some day,
Just now there's sweetness in the yoke.

Were you by chance to crack my shell,
A shabby deed without excuse,
There might emerge, O! who can tell,
No chicken—but a full-fledged goose!

REFERRING TO MRS. ROSS, THE MASSEUSE OF
STRATHPEFFER

WHEN victims racked by aching joints,
Upon their pallets toss ;
For remedy the doctor points
At once to Mrs. Ross !

As Masseuse she is quite the Boss,
For patients ever prays—
Most cruel is that Mrs. Ross,
Tormenting spends her days.

She pinches all the tenderest parts
Of muscle, and of bone !
And this she does altho' it smarts,
However patients groan !

The needful torments, and proportions,
She alone can tell ;
And from the patient's sad contortions,
She does her duty well !

All those who cause to others pain,
('Tis writ in Holy text)
Themselves will catch it hot again,
In this world—or the next !

I caught when I was once a boy,
A Robin, breasted red !
I played with my sweet living toy,
And then snipped off its head !

With Uncle's scissors, sharp and keen,
Alas it is a fact ;
Ashamed I ever since have been,
Of this my wicked act !

That deed so bloody and so fell,
From memory cannot slip :
For my big brother lashed me well
With his stout hunting whip !

That flagellation served me right,
A punishment most fit ;
I told a crammer, in my fright,
And swore I hadn't done it !

Although a deed you could not cap,
Of this scissorial fashion,
In heart of many a little chap,
Is coiled a fiendish passion !

If in beheading ONE poor Robin,
My conscience sorely pricks ;
Her bosom must o'er-flow with sobbin(g),
She lives by heartless tricks !

In England a society
Protects all helpless brutes,
They're men of great propriety
Known chiefly by their fruits !

If her they caught I vow (in Rhyme)
To limbo she would go,
To expiate her cruel crimes,
For 'bout a year or so !

I would not tell this Torturer,
Who crunches legs and arms ;
I think that any sorcerer
Would do as much with charms.

But though incredulous I be,
If she effects *one* cure,
Her fame shall be proclaimed by me,
For ever shall endure !

I'll set her high on Pedestal,
Of gold, and not of dross :
My idol, grand, majestic,
That skilful Mrs. Ross.

TO MAUD (MY COUSIN) AGAIN, IN REPLY TO SOME
DILL AND DALLY ACCUSATIONS!

FROM Magdalene Hall, there comes a lay,
Though Maud-lin—yet so bright,
It charms my thoughts the livelong day,
And soothes my dreams all night!

But, coz, I never “dill or dally,”
Although you bagged my chink,
I hate a man to “shill or shally,”
For he’s an ass I think!

I could not well be “up to thee,”
Oh, how thy words do sting!
For thou wast, Maudie, down “on me,”
Thou uppish little thing.

One puts one’s foot in it, sometimes,
By stepping in your “shoes,”
’Tis Boct-less to contend (in Rhyme)
With one of Swaffham’s Dos!

But corn, or cornless, if you stamp,
Upon an old chap’s toe:
Of course there supervenes the cramp,
Which makes him yell out—O!

But hark, ’tis twelve, I hear it strike,
I ought to be in bed;
Well! if my lines you really like,
I’ll rest my weary head!

TO MRS. —, WHO ASKED ME ON ONE OCCASION,
WHEN MY "BUGLER" DIED

YOU asked me when my "Bugler" died :
I could not tell unless I lied !
For aught I know, he ne'er drew breath,
I could not answer for his death !
In Infantry they come out strong,
To Cavalry they don't belong,
My TRUMPETER I cannot find,
He has, I think, been left behind.
I've searched each corner and each nook,
My Lady Bashi, fair Bazouk :
If for the nonce you could efface,
Your sex, you might then take his place.
Your Trumpet blasts would always please,
You Queen of Soldiers' Charities !
I'm "blowed" if I, a General, know,
Who could like you a Trumpet blow ;
Your rousing calls would so inspire,
I'm sure you'd set the Thames on fire ;
And each would shout, whoe'er he be,
Aye, that's the Trumpeter for me.
So, Lady Bashi, blow away,
And sound my praises every day !

TO MISS —

I'VE been all day at Hampstead Home,
Amongst my little Pals :
You know how much I love to roam,
Wherever there are girls !

The Soldiers' Daughters there we teach,
All things that they should know :
And I, Vice-Chairman, chiefly preach,
The way that they should go !
If you some day would kindly try,
(I know how good thou art)
To see the school, 'twould gratify,
The cockles of your heart !
And now, good-bye, I sadly fear
These lines no skill attest,
And when I write to you, my dear,
I always do my best !

TO ALLEN, MY SISTER'S NURSE, ON NEW YEAR'S
DAY

No Mistress fears an earthly ill,
Who can on Allen's care rely ;
That Nurse endowed with boundless skill,
Can almost death itself defy !
And though she has no Cherub wings,
An Angel's duty she fulfils ;
For health and strength to all she brings,
Without a doctor's nasty pills !
Yes, she, the salt of all the earth,
With salve for every ache and pain,
Attests her superhuman worth,
By making old 'uns young again !
May Heaven's rich favours now descend,
On Allen and her Mistress dear ;
May happiness their steps attend,
And bless them both this new-born year.

TO —, ON HER SPELLING "KNACK" WITHOUT A "K"

I CANNOT myself see the use,
 Of K in the Knick or the Knack,
 On words, it is only abuse,
 Superfluous letters to lack!
 The word is pronounced just as well,
 If spelt as a Nick or a Nack:
 And what can it matter, pray tell,
 If "K" the initial it lack?
 Of verses you see I've a knack,
 And care not a bit for the K,
 And, if they of Tennyson smack,
 You'll twig that he copied my lay!

January 4, 1895.

TO MY NEPHEW, INVITING HIM TO LUNCHEON ON
 LITTLE PIG, TO WHICH HE IS DEVOTED

A PORCUPINE, you may not be
 Yet, if for Pork-you-pine,
 Porcis volentibus, lunch with me,
 I promise you some swine!

TO MY NEPHEW, A SAILOR, APPOINTED COMMANDER
 TO THE SHIP *GIBRALTAR*

LET Yankees and Germans beware,
 'Tis cheeky the Briton to flout:
 The "Gib" with Commander so rare,
 Will snuff their impertinence out!

January 9, 1896.

TO MISS —, IN REPLY TO A REQUEST FOR VOTES
TO A CHARITY

'TIS sweet and pleasant thus to see,
Your grand, bold writing once again :
Delightful too it is to me,
That I, dear friend, without a strain,
Of conscience, or of moral law,
Can now obey your mild behest :
I yearn, as in the days of yore,
To meet whatever you request.

TO R. F. PARKES, A YOUNG SAILOR, MET AT
STRATHPEFFER HOTEL

If you and I again should float,
Adown the Highland Vale :
I hope that in Strathpeffer's Boat,
We shall together sail.
A soldier, and a sailor brave,
What crew could better be ?
One rules the land, and one the waves,
Each suited to a T.
And after every jolly sail,
Before we make another,
To my dear wife I'll tell the tale,
And you must tell your mother.
We two, we happy, happy two,
Will sink or swim like brothers,
We'll sail through countries not a few,
Just like so many others !

We up and down the stream of life
In foul and sunny weather,
Without a care, or toil, or strife
We'll pull so well together.

When you're an Admiral in Cocked Hat
And I my race have run,
You'll kindly sometimes think of that
Old General and his fun!

TO MISS —, RETURNING THE PLAY OF "BEAUTY
AND THE BEAST," IN WHICH SHE HAD BEEN
PERSONATING THE FORMER CHARACTER

SADLY should I shirk my duty,
And perhaps be thought a beast,
If I should fail to send you, "Beauty,"
Thanks a thousand times at least.

TO MY OLD FRIEND MRS. LAING, ON HER SENDING
ME A DOZEN OF PORT WINE

At present, like this, abstainers may whine,
But Lady, dear Lady, 'twas ever your forte,
To tenderly linger on days of Laing syne,
And hail them in bumpers of life-giving Port.

TO COLONEL —, ASKING HIM TO TAKE SOME TICKETS
FOR DOUGLAS ELLISON'S CONCERT, GOT UP WITH
A VIEW OF PAYING OFF A DEBT FOR THE PUR-
CHASE OF THE ST. GABRIEL'S BOYS' DRILL UNI-
FORM

YOU are so "uniformly" kind
In keeping up our Charities ;
That you I know will be inclined
To aid these wondrous Rarities !

Besides, the Tickets that you buy,
Pray, try and sell another ;
You can't be flogged—so have a shy,
And never mind the bother—!

Demands like this are never made,
Say, more than once or twice a week ;
So moderate by all, 'tis said,
To differ would be downright cheek !

And whilst we now in "Concert" act,
And smartly dress our little chaps,
We've Bills unpaid, pray note the fact,
For Knicker-bockers, Vests and Caps.

TO COLONEL—, ON HIS SENDING ME TWO HALF-
CROWNS TO PAY FOR TWO TICKETS FOR THE
CONCERT DESCRIBED ABOVE

OH! crown the Clifton, crown him now,
The little Knicker-bockers sing,
Wreath crowns (two half ones) round his brow,
In "Concert" make the welkin ring !

With shouts of triumph Douglas wins
A victory for his little boys :
No longer have they naked pins,
Oh ! see their Knicker-bocker joys !

TO MY SISTER, WHO BEING ILL, I HAD FAILED TO
SEE HER ON HER BIRTHDAY

A SEPTUAGENARIAN brother,
Had he not yesterday missed her ;
With kisses intended to smother,
His octogenarian sister.

TO THE SAME

A SOLDIER true, whate'er his fate,
Never, by any chance forgets,
A gift so fragrant and ornate,
As Lizzie's bunch of violets.

If "Lottie" should have failed to give,
My blessings for those pretty flowers,
My thanks, ('t's true as now I live,)
Flowed not in dribblets, but in showers.

TO THE MISS —, WHO HAD TAKEN EXCEPTION TO MY INSISTING ON THEIR HAVING THE LAST OF A BUNCH OF GRAPES, WHICH HAD BEEN GIVEN TO THEM, BUT WHICH THEY HAD BEEN SHARING WITH US

It was on the eve of their departure from Strathpeffer.

FROM certain ominous, heated streaks,
That flashed across your pretty cheeks,
I fear my little playful trick,
Was one that cut you to the quick!
And as it caused offence to you,
I fain would modify your view,
Of that apparent cool transaction,
Which might have led to your distraction.
I thought it was most kind and sweet,
Of you, to give us such a treat!
My heart then said (for you it gapes)
We've had our share of your own grapes,
For us you've made a sacrifice,
Which seemed most generous and nice;
Our claim on your great self-denial
Imposed on you a fruitful trial!
And this I thought was hardly fair:
And, therefore, 'twas my anxious care
That you should have the last fond bite
Of grapes which were your own, by right!
And here, I venture just to mention,
I thought my charming good intention
Would surely win your approbation,
And not excite your indignation.
But favours are allowed to men
Exceeding threescore years and ten,

And thus I may have stepped, ah me!
 Beyond the bounds of liberty!
 If this be so, I only say
 I much regret that luckless day.
 My antecedents all confirm
 This fact—I never hurt a worm!
 But though my fault I fail to see,
 I pardon ask on bended knee.
 Farewell, I say it from my heart,
 That we the best of friends may part,
 And if again we all should meet,
 Please give to us another treat;
 These sweet and juicy thoughts of mine
 Are all the outcome of the Vine!

1893.

REFERRING TO THE THREE CURATES OF ST.
 GABRIEL'S, VIZ. MR. WILLIAMSON, MR. BLAYDON,
 AND MR. DENTON JONES

*The first had been a famous athlete and winner of various prizes
 at Oxford*

FRED WILLIAMSON victorious,
 The athlete of his day,
 Has now a task more glorious,
 In teaching men to pray!

The other two are good and grave,
 Divinely each intones:
 Bill Blaydon strives our souls to save,
 And so does Denton Jones!

ON MY BIRTHDAY, WRITTEN IN AMY — BIRTHDAY
BOOK

My time, alas! is fleeting fast,
How swiftly flies each natal day,
Repeating as it hurries past,
Prepare, old man, to come away!

TO A LADY WHO USED TO SIT NEXT TO ME AT
CLIFFORD HARRISON'S RECITALS

As matters in which I have little control
Prevent my attendance to-day,
These lines will conduce to the good of your soul,
Whatever the critics may say!

Their beauty the author is sure you will seize,
And copy their style as you write:
Receive them, dear Lady, as specimens please
Of dogg'rels on which you delight!

If of their merits you have any doubt,
Consult that Reciter—O—do,
Who swears that my Poems all others cut out,
And when was a Clifford untrue!

TO MISS —, WHOSE THUMBS WERE BADLY CRUSHED
UNDER A WINDOW-SILL

THERE'S danger in a window-sill,
For sashes break, and down it comes;
Though you, thank God, it failed to kill,
It badly crushed your two poor thumbs!

As on your cruel state I dwelt,
 With all its agonizing pain :
 In every finger-tip I felt,
 Such jams must not occur again !

TO "GERALD" ON HIS SUBSCRIBING 10s. 6d. TO THE
 SOLDIERS' DAUGHTERS' HOME

MAY "Gerald" adored by his Lily-like wife,
 Climb up to the top of the warrior tree !
 And may he reserve each year of his life,
 Just half a bright guinea for me.

Good luck and rich blessings will always attend
 The footsteps of workers wherever they roam,
 Who strive by their words and their deeds to befriend,
 The Soldiers' Daughters' Hampstead Home.

REQUESTING THE SECRETARY TO ACCOUNT TO
 MR. FRY, THE CHAIRMAN, FOR MY ABSENCE FROM
 THE BOARD

THE ill to which my flesh is heir,
 And which my temper sorely ruffles,
 I've christened with much thought and care,
 And called it by the name of snuffles !

Expressive name as it appears,
 To me, and others, I suppose :
 For both my eyes run down with tears,
 And ceaselessly I blow my nose !

So off to Bournemouth on the Sea,
Two days ago I hurried down ;
And happy, happy should I be,
If not so far from friends in Town !

To leave my work in this loose way,
A sin it is of deepest dye ;
But pardon ask for me, I pray,
Of our kind Chairman G. F. Fry.

March 1892.

TO —, ON THE ENTERTAINMENT OF EMILY MOSS,
FROM THE SOLDIERS' DAUGHTERS' HOME, AS A
DOMESTIC SERVANT

I TRUST that our young Hampstead maid,
On whom Miss Bartlett's hopes are staid,
Will prove to you a grand success ;
I trust she will her duty do,
Be self-reliant, good and true,
A servant such as you will bless.

In this our Soldiers' Daughters' school
We have a stringent, rigid rule,
That children should be partly taught
The way that they, as maids should go,
And all the things they ought to know,
And what to do, as servants ought.

Miss Bartlett says in Emily Moss
She found no trace of earthly dross,
For she is like refined gold :
She'll keep a tender loving watch
O'er you, my very dear Miss —,
Provided that you seldom scold !

And she will come to you this week,
Unless by some unlooked-for freak
Her outfit should be scarcely ready ;
God grant I pray that she may suit
And illustrate the wholesome fruit,
Of training girls to be so steady.

You'd call her Ellen, well you may,
What's in a name, the Poets say,
To them would Ellen smell as sweet.
Then Ellen-ize her if inclined,
Whate'er her name, in her you'll find
Domestic Virtues all complete

In "Moss" you have a healthy "plant"
Who will not ever say, she can't
Perform her due allotted work.
With you in favour she will grow,
For Mosses germinate you know,
And honest girls despise a shirk.

And with a soldier's fervent prayer
I now consign her to your care :
So well on you will she attend,
That day by day you needs must feel,
That Ellen Moss is true as steel,
A faithful servant and a friend !

And I who know her Mistress well,
How sweet it is with her to dwell,
Rejoice in that divine decree
Which first brought Moss, oh ! happy day,
Within Miss — genial sway,
The service, where good maids would be.

TO MISS BARTLETT, MATRON OF THE SOLDIERS'
DAUGHTERS' HOME AT HAMPSTEAD, ASKING HER
TO GIVE A CHRISTMAS BOX TO OUR GARDENER
"MANNING," WHO HAD JUST MADE A NEW STAND
FOR THE PIANO, AND A WARDROBE FOR THE
GIRLS

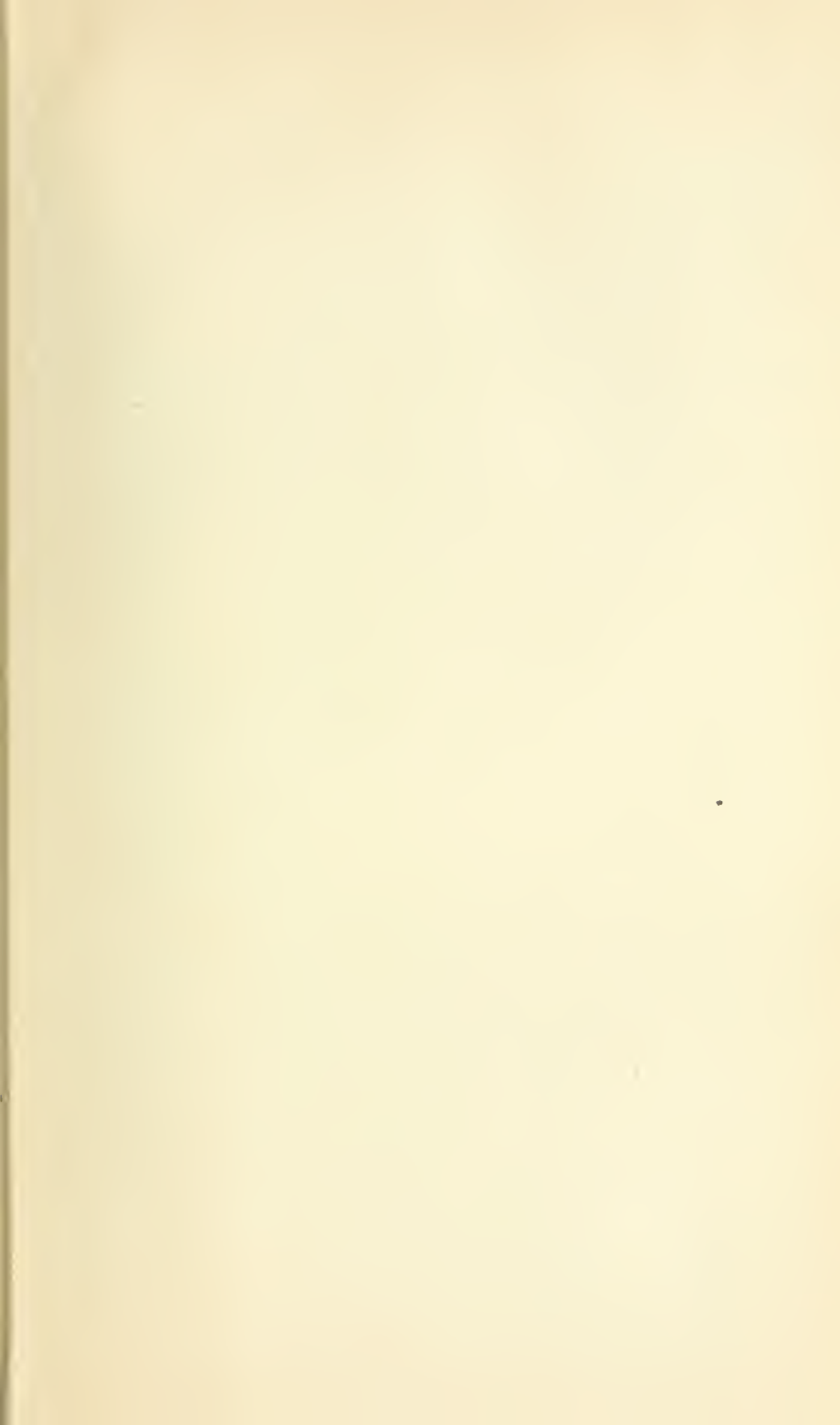
THAT grand Piano-stand, by Manning,
And that most handsome wardrobe job,
Which I with pride was lately scanning,
Deserve, I think, at least five bob.

That self-made carpenter must feel,
As he devoutly goes to kirk,
On Christmas day, with Christmas zeal,
That all admire his handy work.

Advance, Miss Bartlett, these five dibs,
And you I promise to repay ;
I'm honest, true, and tell no fibs,
At least not on a Christmas day.

P.S.—This letter is a day too late,
My memory now is short and jerky,
Besides, one's in a morbid state
When gorged with Sausages and Turkey!

THE END



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